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Erik's Editorial

A THIEF IN THE TOMB OF HORRORS

Moving across the country isn't easy, and it often brings up several uncomfortable questions. Where will I live? Will I make new friends? How do I transfer my car insurance? When I moved from Minneapolis to Seattle to join the RPGA staff, I had a single concern that outweighed all others. How long will it be before I can get back into a campaign?

Fortunately, it wasn't long at all. In short order, I found myself rolling up a character in a brand-new system, DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Third Edition. As many of you know, the new edition has been extensively playtested, and many of the playtesters were culled from the ranks of the RPGA Network Clubs program. I'd missed out on that chance earlier in the year, and looked forward to diving into the new rules.

Third Edition is all about options and opportunities. The design team has done a great job of creating completely new features, while retaining the all-important "feel" of the AD&D game experience. I'm in many ways a First Edition hold-out, so the opportunity to play monks and half-orcs as part of the "core rules" is a welcome change. So welcome, in fact, that I started tinkering with various "old school" character concepts. I needn't have bothered. My would-be gaming group approached me on the day of my first session and said, "Erik, we need a thief."

So much for old school.

As I would soon learn, however, the group needed a thief for a very good reason. After a long stretch of roleplaying-heavy city and countryside encounters, the party had ventured into a dangerous dungeon. *The* dangerous dungeon.

I was headed to the Tomb of Horrors.

Thus was born Fenward Astakane, the daring rogue who had stolen the Seal of Ratik from under the noses of the humanoids of Bone March, the nefarious wastrel known in dockside pubs from Dullstrand to Ekbir, the charming rake who had thieved the hearts of barmaids and baronesses alike. Despite these credentials (or indeed, because of them), Fenward soon became known to his companions as "the guy who gets to stand in front."

In the Tomb of Horrors, standing in front means investigating crawlspaces, feeling the poisonous bite of spikes at the bottoms of several pit traps, jumping through mysterious misty doorways, and much, much worse.

After several years filled with four-hour (primarily) story-based RPGA tournaments and my own role-playing intensive campaigns, I definitely appreciated the chance to get back to good old fashioned dungeoneering. This was high-level campaigning at its finest. We averaged one death per session. One really, really heinous covered in hot lava/squished by giant rollers/disintegrated/ancient mummy rotted death per session. Thankfully, our only cleric never died, so resurrections were possible (though, in Third Edition, costly). Often, a fallen comrade came back from the dead only to put himself in a life-threatening situation all over again.

Several sessions into the campaign, our cleric got fed up with Fenward triggering every single trap in the tomb, and started tossing around divinations like coppers to the poor. Shortly thereafter, we had determined that the quickest path to the evil Acererak led us past several dark, no-doubt trap-laden hallways and doors in a special dungeon level designed by the devious Dungeon Master (Richard Baker, of ALTERNITY® and BIRTHRIGHT™ fame). Ho ho, we though. We'll show up Rich by walking right past his pitiful traps!

Never underestimate the *fear* radius of ancient mummies.

Within one round of entering the room that would lead us, we believed, to the lair of the demi-lich, five of eight party members had failed a saving throw, and were running from two mummies at full speed through random corridors that we, as players, knew were trapped. We decided that rolling dice was the best way to determine which corridors our fear-crazed stalwarts would choose. Meanwhile, the three members who hadn't failed their fear check did their best against two mummies. A *destruction* spell in the second round shaved their numbers to two.

It was ludicrous. Here was a party that had played in this weekly campaign for almost a year before I joined up, running full speed through the tomb, setting off trap after trap, certain that each one would be the last. One of us got stuck in a web-filled chamber. One of us fell into a pit of molten lead. One of us accidentally animated two stone golems. One of us fell into a pit that soon filled with water. The others just kept running in random directions screaming, arms akimbo, waiting for death.

Most of us were laughing so hard we nearly cried.

What does this have to do with the RPGA? For a long time after my original gaming group split up, the RPGA LIVING™ campaigns were my "home game." Instead of the satisfaction of developing a character at home, I traveled to conventions around the country, finding new friends and playing D&D in the tournament environment. All the while, my characters acquired new companions, new experience levels, and new magical items. After a while, I became quite attached to them. Generally, I'd consider myself a fairly cautious player. I enjoy my Living characters, and don't want to see them dead. If, sometimes, it means not taking a risk, I'll usually play on the side of caution.

But I'll tell you, I've seldom had as much fun with my Living characters as I did that night with Fenward Astakane, running scared, having dropped my weapons, through the Tomb of Horrors.

Next time I play a Living campaign, I think I'll inject a little foolhardiness into the game, and see what happens. I might lose magic, I might lose levels, and I certainly might lose my character's life. . . . but I bet I'll have fun.

I hope you'll all be a little foolhardy, too. ■

ERIK

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GEN CON Correction

Due to the miscalculation of points, we announced the incorrect winner for our annual "Best Living Campaign Player" award, which should have gone to Doug Rosson. The RPGA regrets this error.

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As the new century approaches, the staff has been thinking about how to make our programs even better than they are now. Recently, some of the rules for the LIVING CITY™ Campaign caught our attention as being unnecessarily restrictive, so we would like to change them. We hope that these changes make the campaign more enjoyable for your style of play.

RETIREMENT

Effectively immediately, the requirement that PCs must retire from the regular campaign upon acquiring 1,100,000 total experience points is dropped. Characters need never retire from the regular campaign into the high-level campaign expansions. The character may be played, but may never acquire experience points toward advancement above 20th level in any class. Ever. No use of spells, items, or powers will be able to alter this. Further, experience points need no longer be tracked toward retirement, so the dual tracking system for experience points is eliminated. We will be using a level-based system only. If your character was retired because of the experience points limit, you now may return it to play.

This system depends on one thing from you, however. Our retirement requirement was in place to help prevent high-level characters from dominating games and ruining the fun for players with lower level PCs at a table. Therefore, you are asked to consider the fun of the whole group when deciding which character to play at a given table, and to choose the character you play to contribute to the fun, not ruin it.

If you have a semi-retirement package, continue playing it through the end of 1999 as written on the certificate. Near the end of the year, Troy Daniels (LCActivities@RPGA.Net) will be getting in touch with you about changing your semi-retirement into an equivalent benefit and status under the new procedures we will have in place.

DUAL-CLASSING REQUIREMENT

With the introduction of time units, we have decided to change the requirement on time spent out of play for dual-classing to read: "Characters who dual-class must spend three months of their lives in training for a new class. This may be accounted for using time units (18 units). Record the expenditure on your log sheet and have your next GM sign it off. If you choose not to track time units, your character must be out of play for three months of real time."

ADVENTURE TIERING

With the elimination of retirement, we have re-examined the adventure difficulty tiering system. The following tier chart appears in modules sanctioned after Gen Con 1999. To determine the tier, add the level of all the characters. Multi-classed and dual-classed characters count as their highest level plus one for each additional class. In addition, add the levels of any adventuring NPCs the PCs may bring and the full hit dice of any animals which can enter combat on the side of the PCs. Compare the total to the chart below to find the tier.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

One of the problems that has plagued the campaign since the change to tiered experience is the meteoric rise of characters into tier four without sufficient magic to handle that level of play. Therefore, we are going to start awarding experience from adventures by individual character level, not by party tier. The new experience award chart and related details will appear in all LIVING CITY modules sanctioned after August, 1999.

WIZARDS AND HIGH-LEVEL SPELLS

Wizards normally acquire 3 new spells upon reaching a new level, and those spells may be of any level that the wizard can cast. However, spells of 7th, 8th or 9th level cannot be acquired by simply adding them to your spell list. The wizard character must request them through the Wizard's Guild organization (mightywyrm@aol.com). Not all wizard spells of these levels are allowed in the LIVING CITY campaign, so please check with the Wizard's Guild for an allowable list before making your request.

TREASURE IN ADVENTURES

We are now going to allow you to remove more things from an adventure than you will find listed on the treasure summary. The criteria are:

PCs may keep items from the scenario which are listed on the treasure list or which meet the following conditions:

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the PCs cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.

2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the PC to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certed and cannot bring material benefit to the PC. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certed.

3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some PCs. Items which are worth more than 5,000 gp, which are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and magical items will be discovered in the possession of the PC by one means or another. The PC who stole them must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives one Infamy point for being a known thief. For other items which meet the criteria in #1 above, whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not is up to the judge.

Any item retained according to these rules which does not have a certificate will not have a certificate issued for it. Note the item(s) on your log sheet. Also, the campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things which it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time. ■

notes from HQ

LIVING CITY CAMPAIGN CHANGES – MORE LIFE FOR YOUR CHARACTER

NEW LIVING CITY TIERING

	4 players	5 players	6 players	7 players
T1:	4-12	5-13	6-14	7-15
T2:	13-22	14-24	15-26	16-28
T3:	23-32	25-35	27-38	29-41
T4:	33-42	36-46	39-50	42-54
T5:	43-52	47-57	51-62	55-67
T6:	53-64	58-70	63-77	68-83
T7:	65-76	71-84	78-92	84-100
T8:	77-88	85-97	93-107	101-116
T9:	89+	98+	108+	117+

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AUGUST/SEPTEMBER DECATHLON RESULTS

SPECIAL DECATHLON SERVICE EVENT ADDED: MOST CERTIFIED JUDGES AS CLUB MEMBERS BY THE GEN CON® GAME FAIR

Event Period: January 1st to August 4th

- First place: 4 points (CARP)
- No other entrants

BEST REPORT ON THE GEN CON GAME FAIR

Deadline: August 25

- First place: 4 points (FBS)
- Second place: 2 points (CARP)
- Participation: 1 point (BHGS, DWRPS)

BEST PROPOSAL FOR CLUB-CONTROLLED LIVING™ CAMPAIGN

Deadline: September 30

- First place: 5 points (GEAR — Living Rokugan [Legend of the Five Rings, AEG])
- Second place: 3 points (UCC — Living Frontier [Star Trek: The Next Generation RPG, Last Unicorn Games)
- Participation: 1 points (GLARPGAC, WARlords, GAM)

TOURNAMENT PLAY: GEN CON® GAME FAIR

GEAR	1 pt (team)
DWO	1 pt (team)
GAM	1 pt (team)
FOB	1 pt (team)
PM Players	1 pt (team)
The Mob	1 pt (team)
DWO	4 pts
GEAR	4 pts
GAM	2 pts
FOB	2 pts
DAWN	1 pt
CARP	1 pt

RECENT EVENTS

NOVEMBER

MOST TOURNAMENTS OTHER THAN LIVING CAMPAIGNS PLAYED BY CLUB MEMBERS

Event Period: January 1st to November 30th

- First place: 6 points
- Second place: 4 points
- Participation: 1 point
- Results posted with the overall results

All tables of any RPGA® tournament other than Living campaign events count toward this category, no matter the placement. This includes all classic events, ADVENTURER'S GUILD tournaments which are not LIVING CITY, and the Club tournament. Judging instances do not apply. The results will be averaged over club size as of December 15th, so the results will be posted in terms of average non-Living events per club member. This is a tournament play event, but does not count against the limit of four events (so with this one you could play five tournament play events).

MOST TOURNAMENT ROUNDS JUDGED

Event Periods: June 1st to November 30th

- First place: 4 points
- Second place: 2 points
- Participation: 1 point
- Points for the second period won't be posted until the announcement of Decathlon winners.

All rounds of scored and posted Network events judged by club members during the event period qualify. Don't worry about writing on the scoring pack; we'll find judging occurrences by RPGA number. As with last year, this event is normalized by club size, so the results will be in terms of average number of rounds judged per club member. Points will be awarded for each of the two periods listed above. The delay in posting for the first season is to allow us time to process scoring packs from conventions late in May.

MOST SERVICE TO THE NETWORK

Event Periods: August 1st to November 30th

- First place: 4 points
- Second place: 2 points
- Participation: 1 point
- Third period points won't be posted until Decathlon winners are announced.

Service points earned by all club members will be totaled at the end of the event period, and averaged by club size. Reporting will be in terms of average service points earned per club member. All instances of service have to be reported, but there is no form necessary. Service at conventions must be reported by the convention RPGA coordinator. Service to programs (such as volunteering) or to the Living campaigns must be reported by the appropriate person in charge (Campaign Coordinator, program coordinator, or Regional Director depending on the situation). We won't chase these down; it is your responsibility to make sure service instances get reported by the deadline. You can earn service points for almost anything you do for the Network; let us know how you served and we'll put up points. Points will be awarded for each of the three periods listed above.

UPCOMING TOURNAMENT PLAY OPPORTUNITIES

ShaunCon	Individual (Jung at Heart)
Con-Fest	Individual (Bride of the Gods) ■

table talk

1999 CLUBS DECATHLON — THE HOME STRETCH

PARTICIPATING TEAMS (TO DATE)

ARC Fellowship (ARC)
Black Hand Gaming Society (BHGS)
Capitol Area Roleplayers (CARP)
Clarksville Gamemaster's Guild (CCG)
Death Warmed Over (DWO)
D.O.G.S
Dragons and Wizards Network (DAWN)
Dragonwing Roleplaying Society (DWRPS)
Fellowship of the Black Spot (FBS)
Fellowship of the Blade
Gamers' Association of Mid-America (GAM)
Gaming Enthusiasts' Association of Rolla (GEAR)
Greater Los Angeles RPGA Council (GLARPGAC)
Lost Merchant's Guild
Magma Gamers
The Mob
Old Oeridians
Ottawa Society of Questors, Imagineers and Pundits (OSQUIP)
PM Players
Universe Construction Company (UCC)
WARlords
Waterdeep Boys Club (WBC)

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Service Points
Rewarding RPGA Service in the New Millenium

The RPGA has been awarding service points for many years. Originally, the points contributed toward one's judge rating. In the transition to the new database, that bump in judge level was removed, and we began to think about how we could redeem service points for more tangible rewards.

Beginning January 1st, 2000, RPGA members will be able to redeem service points for various products and services offered by Wizards of the Coast (not by other Hasbro divisions). We have set a rate of exchange for service points, and you can redeem those you have for items in the Redemption Table below. We are happy to be able to reward those who work to further the RPGA and its goals, and who work to become better game masters and players.

SERVICE POINT CHART

CODE	DESCRIPTION	POINTS
A	Retail and/or Demo GM	50
B	Convention Work	50
C	Charity/Community Service	50
E	Playtest RPGA Tournament	10
F	Playtest Wizards Product	25
G	Member Drives	20
I	Exceptional Service	500
J	Online	75*
K	Tournament Editing	100
L	Campaign Administration	75*
M	Judge Services	50
N	Miscellaneous Service	25
P	Convention Coordination	125
R	Creation TSR game Tournament	5
X	Creation non-TSR game Tournament	100
Z	Points Used	-10

* Per month

To make this work, we re-examined the service point chart to see which items on it contributed to the growth of the RPGA, and to its good image. Then we combined some redundant listings and moved points around. We re-set the values for service awards based on our new paradigm, which is defined as "how many of this do we want someone to do in order to get a free membership." Some of these values are influenced by the fact that you receive other rewards or compensation for the activities, and thus are set lower than they are really worth to us. After all that, we developed the chart you see here. This is the definitive chart for service items and how many points you get for doing something for the network. All service points have been re-posted at these values, so that you can see how many points you may redeem.

We then examined the service point awards that have been made in the past, and tried to find a way to allow redemption of old points. Unfortunately, there were a great many points issued throughout the history of the RPGA, and we could not redeem them all. So, we decided that all service points awarded after the sale of TSR to Wizards of the Coast would be redeemable under the new system. Though we cannot thank those who worked during the early years enough, we cannot afford this system if we don't draw the line somewhere. Those people who have service points posted from "of old" will find an entry for "Service Points used" on their records before January 1st, indicating which points are not redeemable and bringing their net total to show the points which are redeemable.

Though we cannot please everyone, we hope that by introducing this method of rewarding people who work for the RPGA that we encourage you to do your part to make the network great. Thanks for all the work you have done in the past, and we hope to see more of you in years to come.

To redeem your points, simply use the form in the Members Only section of our website, or send a letter to HQ requesting the redemption choice you want, and we'll take care of it. If you want to know how many service points you have, use the Points Display in the Members Only section of the website or send a SASE to HQ and we'll send you your points history. ■

REDEMPTION TABLE

ITEM	COST IN SERVICE POINTS
RPGA GUILD-LEVEL™ membership	500
RPGA Family membership	250
Free Admission to GEN CON®	1,325
Free Admission to ORIGINS™	1,075
Free admission to WINTER FANTASY™	625
Free plane flight* to GEN CON, ORIGINS, or WINTER FANTASY	11,250
RPGA Merchandise and back-issues of POLYHEDRON	25 points per dollar spent

Note: We plan to add more redemption options as additional ideas come to us.

* From within the continental U.S.

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RPGA Network Tournament Ordering Policies

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1ST, 2000

RPGA provides adventures to game masters and convention coordinators for use at home game groups, club meetings, game days, and conventions. We provide quality roleplaying tournaments in a variety of game systems. One-round, two-round, and three-round events are available. A round is one four-hour game session. Home games need not be played in four hours, but all tournaments are written so that it is possible to finish in this time period.

RPGA defines three types of event venues, or shows, where events can be run:

• A **convention** is defined as a show which historically has run or plans to run 25 or more tables of RPGA events over at least two full days. Conventions are defined as open to the public.

• A **game day** is defined as any show which runs fewer than 25 tables, or runs on one day only. These can take place anywhere, including retail locations. Game days are defined as open to the public.

• A **private show** is defined as a show which is not open to the general public, and includes home game group meetings, club meetings, and invitation-only events. It is usually held in a home or club meeting space, but may be held at retail locations if the store owner agrees. Private shows cannot run more than two events per date.

To ease the ordering process, and help you quickly decide what you want for your particular needs, we have established the following policies for tournament ordering. By understanding them, you can take maximum advantage of the Network's tournament program.

ORDERING

The preferred method of ordering RPGA events is online. You can reach the tournament ordering pages on our website (www.rpga.com) by logging into the Members Only section. You must be a GUILD-LEVEL™ or Family member of the RPGA to order tournaments for any purpose, and the option for ordering will not appear if you are not a paying RPGA member.

The ordering process will take you through all the steps, but read the instructions before beginning. The pages will enforce the rules presented below.

You may submit a request for events through the mail using the Tournament Request form found in your membership handbook.

TYPES OF EVENTS

The RPGA provides two types of roleplaying tournaments: those which provide characters (called Classic) and those for which the players bring characters (called Campaign). We also can provide team events, which generally are in the Classic format. Campaign events fall into one of our LIVING™ Campaigns. Campaign events generally have a game system type of "Living X," i.e. LIVING CITY™, LIVING JUNGLE™. If you have questions as to which games are which, contact HQ.

RPGA also allows events to be run at different levels of experience. These levels are defined by the players' and game master's RPGA ranking level (see below under Scoring).

• Masters level events are for 3rd level and higher players and game masters. Masters event participants receive triple the normal RPGA points.

• Grand Masters events are for 5th level and higher players and game masters. Grand Masters event participants receive quadruple (4x) the normal RPGA points.

• Paragon events are for 7th level and higher players and game masters. Paragon event participants receive quintuple (5x) the normal RPGA points.

To have a table qualify for one of these levels, four players at the table and the game master must be of the appropriate level.

In addition, there are other designations you can select for your events:

• Benefit events are those for which the revenue from the event tickets or from the convention admission fees is going to a charity. Benefit event participants receive double the normal RPGA points.

• Judge-only events are those you designate for your game masters, as a thanks for running games at your show. Judge-only events are only available at public shows. Judge-only participants do not receive more points; they just get to play something the average attendee does not get to play.

• Regional Championship events must be designated by HQ or a Regional Director.

NUMBER OF EVENTS ALLOWED

• For a public show, a coordinator may request four total events per day of the show, up to a total of 16 events. Of these, two tournaments from each of our Living Campaign settings may be requested per day of the con. So a three-day convention could request 6 LIVING CITY events, 4 LIVING DEATH events, and two AD&D® events for a total of 12 events. These may be of any length that we offer (1, 2, or 3 rounds).

• For a private show, a coordinator may order two events.

The list of available scenarios is available online at www.rpga.com under Game Play. Please observe the dates of availability for the scenarios you want; you can only order them for dates after they become available for the type of show you plan to run.

REQUEST DEADLINE

• A tournament request received online is due two weeks before the show start date. If sent through the U.S. Mail, it is due one month before the show start date. Requests which do not meet this deadline criteria will not be honored.

• Tournament requests which include new scenarios

written for the convention must be received six months in advance of the convention start date. For each day late, one new scenario will be replaced with a scenario from the library.

To find out about having scenarios written for your show, contact HQ. New scenarios are a benefit of conventions only (see below).

PAYMENT AND FEES

Tournaments themselves have no fees attached to them. Shows which order prizes and scoring packets will be charged fees. Payment of these fees must be by credit card.

RUNNING THE GAMES

The scenarios will come by email, so a valid email address which can receive file transfers up to 2 MB is required to order scenarios online. With the scenarios will come instructions and a scoring packet file.

Resources on how to run RPGA tournaments can be found in your membership handbook and online at our website, under Game Play.

SCORING AND RPGA RANKING

The RPGA maintains an international ranking system for roleplayers. When RPGA-sanctioned events are run at shows, a scoring packet is completed by the players at the table. The players and the game master receive experience points toward their international ranking. These points work like experience points in the AD&D game, in that the more you have, the higher your level.

You are expected to complete scoring packets for each table, and return the results to HQ within four weeks of your show. You may report results in one of three ways:

• You should report the results online if you can. Go to the Members Only section of our website and log in. Then select the show you wish to report, and use the form provided to enter each scoring packet from the grid on the back. When you are finished with all the packets, click on "Process Packets" and you are all done. The packets will be checked for errors and posted overnight.

• You may use one of the results reporting software packages we have approved to send us a data file of your results. Check the website under Tournaments to find out about these packages. They offer more than just results reporting; they can be used to help schedule games and game masters at your convention, and print reports used for easily getting players to their tables with a game master.

• You may mail the packets to RPGA Results, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707. The packets take a couple of weeks to process once we receive them.

Failure to report results will result in you not being allowed to order future tournaments until the missing results have been reported. Members expect to receive points when they play RPGA scenarios, so please do your part to help provide them their points.

CONVENTION SUPPORT

If your show will be running 25 or more tables of events over two or more days, it qualifies as a convention (in our terms—it may still be a convention to you if it does not meet this criteria). Conventions have access to additional benefits:

• Conventions which have run 25 tables at past shows (at a single location), or which show great promise of doing so this year, may submit new events which are written for the convention. A convention can submit up to 12 total rounds of new events for the convention, or the maximum allowed for the length of the convention, whichever is smaller. Thus a convention which is allowed 8 total events can submit 8 rounds of new events, and one that is allowed 16 total events can submit 12 rounds of new ones. Of these, two may be from each LIVING Campaign. Thus, a convention can submit two new LIVING CITY events, and/or two new LIVING DEATH events, and/or two new LIVING JUNGLE events, and/or two new *Virtual Seattle* events (and/or two of any other LIVING campaign we may have).

• Conventions which ran 100 tables the previous year may submit three new events in each LIVING Campaign setting. Conventions which ran 300 tables the previous year may submit four new events in each LIVING Campaign setting.

• Conventions may order prizes from RPGAHQ, as part of their tournament request. For more information contact HQ.

• Conventions have access to some tournament adventures not available to game days or private gatherings.

• Conventions have access to all tournament adventures for three months from the premier date, whereas all other gatherings have to wait for at least six months.

• Conventions may have premier versions of LIVING campaign events, which could contain more interesting magical items, plot-affecting summary sheets (so the players have an impact on campaign plots), and other differences from events run at smaller shows.

• Conventions have the right to run some events as competitive tournaments. Competitive events use the same scoring packet as other events, but the formula for awarding points depends more on individual performance. Competitive points will be used to determine qualification for roleplaying championships.

• RPGA points for conventions will be higher than for small gatherings. A multiplier in the calculation of points will apply if there are 25 or more packets in the results file. This increase in points will not affect top rankings, which are run from table score totals.

RETAIL GAMES

Retail game days organized through the RPGA Retail Coordinator (bhagwan@wizards.com) follow the rules for Game Days above, but receive one free box of prizes prior to the game day. Further, for every 10 additional game results reported from the store location, they will receive another free box of prizes after the game day. Contact the Retail Coordinator for details. ■

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A New Year, a new millennium (sort of), and a new competition. Welcome one and all to the RPGA Network's 2000 Decathlon. In the pages that follow, you'll see the complete rules for next year's competition, an event list, and tips on how to compete

As in years past, the Decathlon is a way for Network clubs to show off their creative talents and skill at role-playing. The events are designed so that everyone has a fighting chance to win, while providing a fun, relaxed competition for the membership.

Competition, you say? What is there to compete for? Why, the Fabulous Big Trophy, of course. And then there's great gobs of gaming product, and the adulation of, well, thousands. In fact, any club entering ten events (Decathlon, get it?) is eligible for nifty prizes. In addition to the Championship, the Second and Third place clubs will take home trophies and cool gaming products.

2000 Club Decathlon

THE BUZZ

• To enter tournament events, HQ must receive two weeks advance notice. This notice can come by email or by form, but the RPGA numbers of all participants must be included along with the convention name. Entrant(s) can be changed at the last minute in case of emergency, but notice must be received by HQ on the Monday following the convention. Players need not write anything on the tournament packet. Tournament results will be posted when scoring packets are received at HQ.

• To enter creative events, submit the entry with a decathlon form and standard disclosure form. If you submit by email, attach the file and note the event you are entering. Submissions must be received by the deadline noted, not postmarked by the deadline.

• Service events can be entered using the form or by email any time until the deadline for the event. The club name and event entered are the only required pieces of information, but again, HQ must receive notice by the deadline. Some service events take place over a long period of time. Provided the entry comes in before the final deadline, all points for the period in question will be entered. (You won't lose out for entering near the end of the service period, but you will lose out if you don't enter at all.)

Please note that club members must participate in all events on behalf of a single club. A club member is defined as an RPGA member who is listed in the database as belonging to that club. RPGA members who belong to more than one club can only participate in the Decathlon on behalf of the club in which they are registered in the database. This is because the database automatically tracks many aspects of the competition, and we've found it best not to confuse our database (you wouldn't like it when it's angry).

ENTERING BY EMAIL

If entering an event by e-mail, please try to adhere to the following format:

Subject line should read: Decathlon entry, (creative/service/tournament play)

The main body of your message should contain the following information

Club name
Name of event
Members participating
Entry

Email entries to Scott Magner at bhagwan@wizards.com. Entries buried in an e-mail about water-skiing will probably not be noticed, and may cause Egg-on-Face Syndrome for either your club or HQ. While treatable, Egg-on-Face Syndrome is quite embarrassing and uncomfortable for those involved. Try also to use a

TOURNAMENT PLAY

Clubs may enter up to four tournament events, of which up to two may be team events. You must enter at least two tournament play events to be in the running for the big prizes, but unlike in the past, you do not need to enter a team event this year. A different club member must play in each individual event. Several clubs may get points from the same tournament, but only one member from your club can enter a given Individual Play event. Pick from the convention list on page 11; they've been chosen so that they almost everyone has a chance to get to some of them. If the player doesn't show up and no replacement is designated, then the club can enter a different tournament event later.

INDIVIDUAL PLAY

First place:	3 points
Second place:	2 points
Participation:	1 point

TEAM PLAY

First place:	6 points
Second place:	4 points
Participation:	2 points

Results are posted when we process scoring packets for the convention.

All specific tournament information will be posted on the website and in POLYHEDRON® as soon as events for the convention are confirmed. Conventions may be added to this list later on, especially in event-less regions. If you wish to have conventions added, please contact HQ

CREATIVE EVENTS

The events below allow club members to show their creativity on behalf of the group. Clubs can enter each event more than once, but each individual person may only submit one entry to any single event (one person can submit in multiple events, though).

For example, JD can submit only one item for the Legendary Weapon event, but he can still submit one tournament and one monster, too. In cases of co-creating (two people working on an entry), both must be members of the same club. Lastly, a single club member can't contribute to more than three creative events. The idea is for the whole club to participate.

Choose those events that best fit your club members' talents. There is an event due every month through September. Winning entries in some categories will be published in POLYHEDRON *Magazine* soon after the judging is completed.

BEST LEGENDARY WEAPON

Deadline: January 31

First place:	4 points
Second place:	2 points
Participation:	1 point

Results posted by February 11

Every campaign has one. A lost artifact. A tremendous warship from a forgotten civilization. An engine of destruction that claimed the life of its creators, and now lurks in a forgotten laboratory. Here's your chance to show us yours. Show us that fabled relic that all adventurers dream about (in 800 or fewer words). We are looking for more than the archetypal Magic Sword, so impress us. (Magic swords will be accepted, of course.)

BEST CLUB NEWSLETTER FOR THE FIRST QUARTER

Deadline: February 29

First place:	4 points
Second place:	2 points
Participation:	1 point

Results posted by March 17

We liked reading the newsletters so much last year, we decided to use this event again. Club newsletters are good for keeping club members in touch, and this event recognizes the best among them. Submit an issue of your club newsletter by the deadline. One issue. That's it. The issue must be one actually sent to your club members. The newsletters will be judged on content, presentation, what they say about your club, and how much fun they are to read. Yeah, it's subjective. So entertain us.

MONSTER MASH

Deadline: Monsters submitted by March 31, combats to take place at GEN CON® Game Fair.

First Place:	5 points
Second Place:	3 Points
Participation:	1 point

Results posted after the dust clears at GEN CON

Here it is, the winner of the 1999 new Decathlon event. Each Club should design and test monsters, according to guidelines we will make available in the Clubs area of our website at www.rpga.com. These monsters will then spar in a single elimination tournament within the club. The top monster from each club will be submitted to HQ, who will turn them into models to be used at a grand Monster Mash Kill-A-Thon, to be held at GEN CON. The submitted monsters will battle it out in a winner-take-all arena combat. Clubs will keep the models of monsters they defeat.

ONE ROUND TOURNAMENT

Deadline: April 30

First place:	5 points
Second place:	3 points
Participation:	1 point

Results posted by May 12

Write a one-round tournament in any game system we use in the tournament program. The tournament must include six or more well-developed encounters and necessary maps. Player characters are required when applicable. The tournament may be designated for a specific convention.

Submit a disk copy of or email the submission in a format readable by MS Word (we recommend .rtf), a printout of the submission, and the necessary forms. All entries must adhere to the RPGA Standards of Content as published in the Membership Handbook and on the website. In lieu of a formal edit, at the very least run it through a spelling and grammar checker. All stat blocks must be correct. Entries should not exceed 15,000 words, not including characters. When writing, try to strike a balance between including the necessary information and being wordy.

BUILDING THE PERFECT GAMEMASTER

Deadline: May 31

First place:	5 points
Second Place:	3 points
Participation:	1 point

Results posted by June 16

What is that special something that makes great gamemasters great? Write an essay for us, no more than a thousand words, about just this thing. Style is up to you, but include more than just a job description. Entries will be judged on both presentation and content. The winner will be used in future member publications and promotions.

MULTI-ROUND TOURNAMENT

Deadline: June 30

First place:	6 points
Second place:	4 points
Participation:	2 point

Results posted by July 31

See the One-round Tournament Event description. Apply the requirements to each tournament round in a multi-round event.

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TOURNAMENT PLAY GRID

January:	Winter Fantasy(Fort Wayne, IN)	Individual
February:	Ghengis Con (Denver, CO)	Individual
	OrcCon (Los Angeles, CA)	Individual
March:	Branscon (Branson, MO)	Individual
	Conn Con (Chaterbury, CT)	Individual
April:	WIRB (Everywhere)	Individual
	Norwescon23 (Seattle, WA)	Team
May:	Ben Con (Denver, CO)	Team
June:	DragonCon (Atlanta, GA)	Individual and Team
July:	Origins (Columbus, OH)	Individual and Team
August:	Gen Con (Milwaukee, WI)	Individual, Team, Monster Mash
September:	Shorecon (Cherry Hill, NJ)	Individual

Adventurer's Guild: 2000

A NEW SYSTEM FOR THE NEW YEAR

As the RPGA transitions into the new century, so too will the ADVENTURER'S GUILD Retail Play Program. We have redesigned the program for maximum convenience and customization, utilizing feed back collected over the last year.

In the year 2000, the RPGA has a new initiative. "Adventures for Everyone." We are doing away with the $10/per round fee for our tournament adventures, provided that the game master provides us with a valid e-mail address. Tournament rounds will be sent out in PDF format, which in turn will be printed out by the GM, and run for the players.

This convenience applies also to our popular in-store play programs. Each participating store will be partnered with one of these game masters, who will run or coordinate the games played in the store. And the partnership will be a profitable one, for all involved. For every round of RPGA Network games played in the store, the partners will be rewarded. The store, for hosting the games, will receive a two dollar credit toward the order of Wizards of the Coast products, up to a maximum of $200 per calendar year (100 games). While it is certainly possible to run more than 100 games in a year, we will have other rewards for those stores that do so.

The game master, for running the games in a game store and not in his basement, will receive a number of Service points applied to his RPGA Network ranking for each round. These points can be redeemed for products and special offers through the Network. After running and scoring the adventures, the GM will have the store owner sign off on the results sheet that the games were actually played in the store. Upon return of this results sheet to Network HQ, both the Store and GM will receive their reward.

But we are not leaving the players out of our enlightened madness either. In 2000, we are printing special prize certificates for the winners of games played in stores. These certificates will be redeemable for RPGA special offers and in-game benefits.

So, you might ask, what's the catch? Every month, the RPGA will send out a special "Premier Adventure," keyed to an upcoming product sold in stores. This adventure will be complete with characters, and everything needed to just sit down and start playing. In order to receive any of the rewards listed above, the Premier Adventure must be played at least once during its designated calendar month.

Also, every game for which stores wish to receive credit must be open to anyone who would like to play. No private or closed sessions which happen to take place in stores will qualify for the promotional offer.

A special order list for store games will be available on our website. After following the instructions for ordering, the adventures will be sent to the GM. That's all there is to it. After the game, have the store owner sign and return the forms to HQ. These forms can be mailed or faxed back to HQ. All results returned to HQ will be processed, but only those results which have been signed and returned by the store will qualify for the rewards listed above.

For further information on the 2000 Adventurer's Guild Retail Play season, please contact:

Scott J. Magner
RPGA Network
Retail Coordinator
Phone; 425-254-2942
e-mail: bhagwan@wizards.com
fax: 425-226-3182 ■

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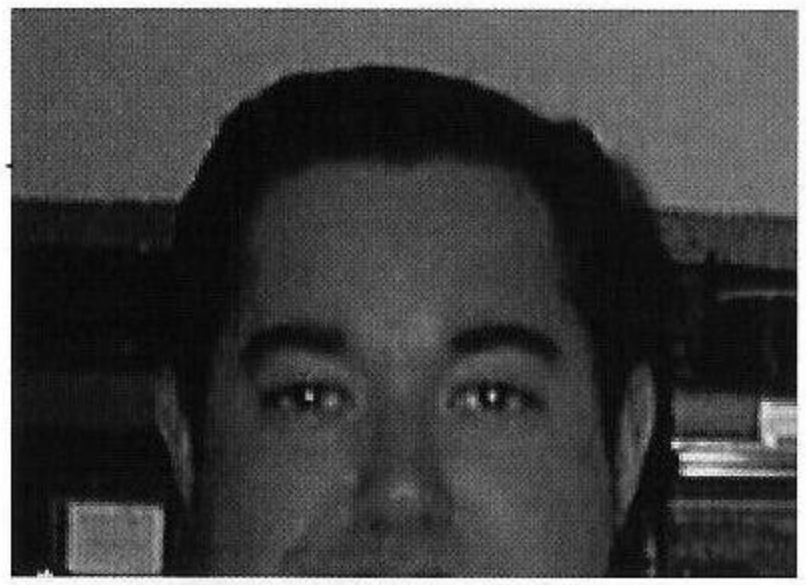

RICH OSTERHOUT - EMERGING FROM THE SHADOWS

How did you get started gaming?

I got started by playing with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® club in my high school. I wasn't very active at first, but steadily got more involved. By the last half of my senior year, I was involved in a weekly campaign with a group of friends. I soon found out that I couldn't stand not knowing everything that was going on "behind the scenes" and switched to being a GM once I got into college. College also exposed me to many other games and my nine year stint in the military expanded that even more. I've played just about every major gaming system from each genre, plus just about every flavor of AD&D®.

How did you get started in the RPGA?

One year a friend and I flew all the way back from Japan (where I was stationed) to attend GEN CON® 25 Game Fair. We had not pre-registered, so we showed up to get into on-site registration line at around 4:00 A.M. on Wednesday. We found that most of the events we wanted to get into were already closed, but there were some RPGA events still open, particularly the seminars. We signed up that day, although that was an adventure in itself. We had to stealth around the basement of the arena until someone caught us — he asked us what we were doing, since we didn't have any staff badges. We told him we wanted to join the RPGA and he took us to RPGA Headquarters. They weren't even open yet, but they signed us up. About the only thing we were able to actually play was the benefit, and we had a blast!

What convinced you to become one of the moving forces in the RPGA's *Virtual Seattle* (The Shadowrun shared-world campaign)?

I'd written a couple of classic Shadowrun tournaments for the RPGA, and people seemed to like them overall. LIVING CITY™ events, however, were still the big pull at the conventions I attended. When I found out that there was a "living" world for Shadowrun, I decided to give it a look.

Virtual Seattle didn't have a lot of the problems and hang-ups that I felt LIVING CITY had. I GM'ed a few *Virtual Seattle* games and felt there was more to the experience than either LIVING CITY or classics. So I took matters into my own hands and got some of my star Shadowrun players together to write some *Virtual Seattle* scenarios ourselves. It took us just over a year to get the first five Mission: Seattle modules finished. (Mission: Seattle is an all *Virtual Seattle* weekend event similar to Weekend In Ravens Bluff.)

Running *Virtual Seattle* is just a logical extension of my "Shadowrun lifestyle." I write and coordinate the FASA tournaments at GEN CON, and I'm also a freelance writer for the Shadowrun line.

Lately, my dream has been to replace LIVING CITY with *Virtual Seattle* as the RPGA's most popular system. I want to build up the amount and quality of the VS scenarios and have more events like Mission: Seattle to compete against LIVING CITY. I just think it's a better system.

member spotlight

BY STEVE JAY

You're also very active in con and game day organization.

I think it's important for gamers to have a quality convention to attend. As I've mentioned, GEN CON was the first gaming convention I attended. Maybe that jaded me a little, but I've been hard pressed to find anything that spectacular since then.

When I moved to Florida, the only gaming conventions were the gaming rooms found at science fiction fancons. It was bleak at best. Then along came SunQuest. I joined up with the SunQuest crew in the summer of 1995, right before their first convention. I helped out as much as possible, wanting to ensure that we had the type of convention I would want to attend. We did very well our first year, but I thought we could do better. I've worked hard as president of SunQuest now for two years, and we've expanded our events to at least one per quarter. Soon we'll be running an event almost once per month!

What do you do in your mundane, workday life?

My real world persona is that of a network administrator for a multimedia training company. I'm almost finished with a computer science degree and am working toward my Microsoft Computer Certification. It's a wonder I have any time for gaming. I try to read a lot, and usually have a science fiction or fantasy novel to read at home to counteract the technical stuff I do at work.

I'm definitely a gamer disguised as a mundane. At work I've diagramed my network using Shadowrun matrix topology, which works out well since both my technicians play (or have played) Shadowrun as well! I've named my servers after Shadowrun standards also - I'm a corporate decker through and through. ■

Rich encourages all Shadowrun and *Virtual Seattle* fans to contact him at: president@sunquestgames.com

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city stories

THE HALL OF LUCK - THE RAVENS BLUFF TEMPLE OF TYMORA BY KEITH HOFFMAN

The Lady of Chance has always provided to her many followers in the Vast. To the halflings of Ravens Bluff, "Tymora's blessing" is more than a simple catchphrase — it is a reflection of their lives, a symbol of belief that brought them to the city and that has kept them there for more than 60 years. Then, a small group of halflings piloting a grand magical ship on the Dragon Reach ran afoul of a terrible sea storm. As the ship began to flounder, all seemed lost, until the passengers and crew spotted a vague vision of land barely visible to the east. Believing the sight of shore to be a gift from Tymora herself, the halflings abandoned their craft to the depths, desperately swimming to dry land. They came ashore just north of Ravens Bluff on a jut of land still known as Luck's Point. The surviving halflings settled in Ravens Bluff and opened a small gambling hall. From its profits, they built the first Hall of Luck in Ravens Bluff.

Today the Hall of Luck consists of 11 buildings, each constructed in a different architectural style but with the coin symbol of Tymora proudly displayed above every door. Originally a collection of shops and rooming houses, each of the structures that now make up the temple were purchased by adventurers, until the entire city block had been consumed by the "temple."

Silver Bird Hall, the original Hall of Luck, is the primary place of worship. In the lintel of its main entrance, below the symbol of Tymora, is carved a symbol of the moon, harp and stars. Kevorn Hall, a three-story rooming house, is the clergy residence and Desbapemt Hall is the guest quarters for passing adventurers. There are three gambling halls, the Red, the Blue, and the Green, each featuring different games on the first floor and rooms for private meetings on the second floors. Each room is named after a famous adventurer. There are also three Halls of Hazards (the Gold, the Silver, and the Bronze), dubbed by wags as the School of Chance, where both adventurers and ordinary people can (for the sum of 25 gp) learn to overcome (mostly illusionary) obstacles and face personal challenges. The priests of Tymora refer to the hazards as "confidence builders."

In the center of the block is a small, outdoor garden with trees, shrubbery, flowers, a pond, bench, and a statuary shrine to Finder Wyvernspur. The Rebel Bard built the shrine last year during a visit. A local bard serves as the Shrine Keeper. The Hall of Luck (TH10) complex fills an entire city block in Holyhouse Neighborhood, between Blacktree Boulevard North, Fireleap Lane, DeVillars Ride, and Amandagar Street.

Though the temple sponsors a seat on the Clerical Circle, it seldom interacts with the city government. Luckmistress Clarissa Tupkas frequently skips the often stuffy meetings of the Circle, instead sending delegates who generally look upon the proceedings with unmitigated boredom. Instead of council work, the temple hierarchy prefers to work with key individuals in the city, encouraging them to take action without waiting for consensus or the decision of government bodies. The priests of Tymora never let the decisions of the government or the Clerical Circle stand in their way of doing what they think is right.

In this regard, the temple sponsors a large midsummer festival to inspire Ravenaars to take a chance and pursue their dreams by breaking out of the rut of mundane daily life. As adventurers represent the antithesis of mundanity, The Hall of Luck remains a staunch supporter of adventuring, working to minimize the city regulation and taxation of such, and sponsoring several adventuring companies.

It seems ironic that the temple of Tymora has not become more prominent in this City of Adventurers, but the sage realizes that Ravens Bluff's adventurers are more renown for seeking magic-endowed treasure than for seeking the good fortune of Tymora. The Tymoran clergy have the constant challenge to convey the meaning and benefit of "The joy of the doubt and the danger," and "Fortune favors the bold" to the public. The key to life in the eyes of Tymora is for each individual to set their goals, whether for self-development, personal fortune, or benefit of others, and to act, to struggle, to take a chance, and to live in the pursuit of those goals. Acting without goals, indulging in reckless whims or random, meaningless gambles is not the way to seek Tymora's good fortune, but rather opens the way to Beshaba's misfortune. The devotees of the temple live by the following creed:

- One should be bold, for to dare is to live.
- Do good deeds for others, neither for fame nor profit.
- Opposing evil may be fraught with peril, but it is a worthy goal.
- Do not protect yourself from risk while leaving others in jeopardy.

TEMPLE STAFF

In Ravens Bluff's temple of Tymora, important positions of power are assigned by games of chance. With Tymora's blessing shining on her, the current Luckmistress has retained her role as High Priestess for five years.

LUCKMISTRESS (HIGH PRIESTESS): CLARISSA TUPKAS

Human female 9th level Cleric

Age: 39	Alignment: CG
Height: 5'4"	Weight: 130 pounds
Hair: Blue	Eyes: Silver

While Tupkas is the head of the Hall of Luck, she leads by example and personal counseling rather than by formal directives, public speeches, and temple missives. She is more interested in inspiring young and old adventurers to seek their fortunes and to seize the moment than in maintaining the day-to-day activities of temple life. Clarissa's favorite activity is to tour the city's taverns (in magical disguise) in

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search of adventurers discussing their next challenge and to grace the boldest of the lot with the Favor of Tymora. Though well-known among the city's long-time adventurers, the Luckmistress seldom joins adventuring groups in her true name or appearance these days; young thrillseekers or those who have recently arrived often do not know of her ruse. She often travels with these unsuspecting adventurers, posing as an acolyte of Tymora and rendering aid to the brave and the bold.

In her natural form, Clarissa is beautiful and petite. Her infectious smile warms the room and her striking hair and eyes make her the center of attention in almost any crowd. It is hard to identify her style as other than in constant change — from an elfin tomboy look to a great lady in a ballgown to a seductive bar wench. "Embrace change" is her personal motto. (Clarissa Tupkas was the PC played by the late Steve Glimpse.)

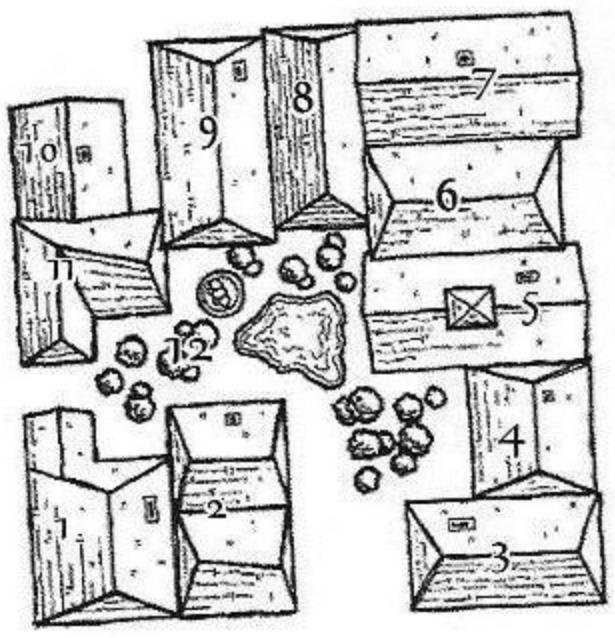
proprietor eight years ago, and remains a silent owner.

Matasian has only one problem; two of Ravens Bluff's many eligible female adventurers are courting him. He recently joined a guild of fun-loving adventurers called The Grand Gauche in an attempt to find others who understand his lifestyle and applaud his "women troubles."

Not actually a member of the temple clergy, Matasian's responsibilities include all administrative interactions with the public of Ravens Bluff as well as acting as the master of ceremonies of temple festivals.

Windbough typically wears a silver-colored shirt, a black vest, black breeches, a bright blue cape, and a silver ribbon tied around his long black hair. His rapier and main-gauche complete his swashbuckler look.

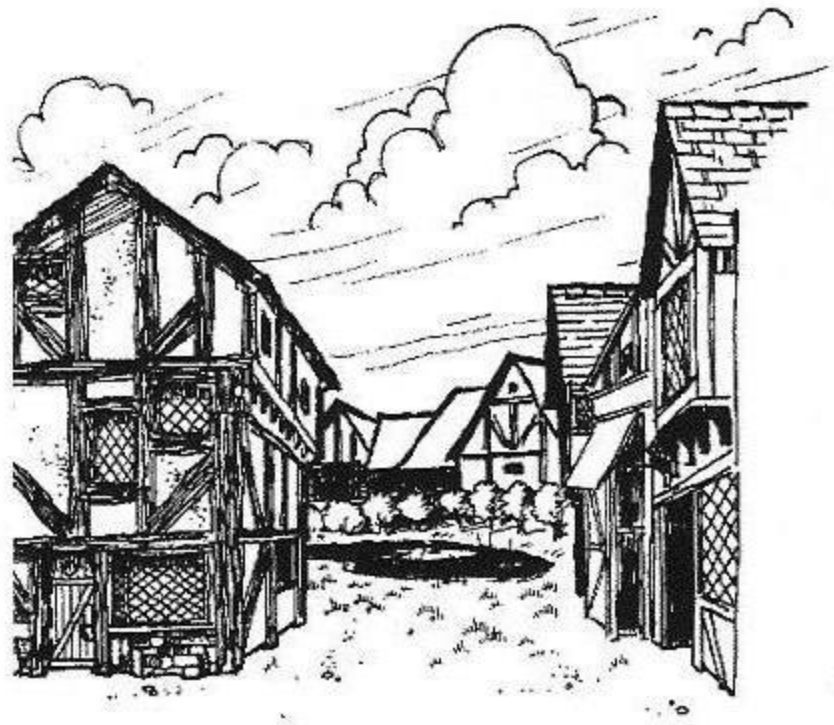
The Hall of Luck



view from above

Legend

1. Silver Bird hall
2. Kevorn hall
3. Gold hall of hazard
4. Red Gambling hall
5. Desbapemt hall
6. Silver hall of hazard
7. Blue Gambling hall
8. Temple Storage
9. Bronze hall of hazard
10. Green Gambling hall
11. Temple reception area
12. Outdoor Garden



view from street

Illustration by Todd Gamble

MASTER OF RITUALS MATASIAN WINDBOUGH

Half elf male 8th level Mage / 9th level Fighter(Swashbuckler)

Age: 74	Alignment: NG
Height: 5'11"	Weight: 138 pounds
Hair: Black	Eyes: Blue

Matasian Windbough has lived in the Vast all his life, finding an early devotion to Tymora beneficial to his unofficial career as a professional gambler. Thanks to the blessings of his goddess, Matasian has always made money gambling, but he is driven by more than simple financial gains. For Matasian, it is the spectacle of "the sport," in which gamblers decide to risk fortunes on a single roll of the die, that captures his interest and emotion. At various times, he has owned six taverns and four gambling houses in Ravens Bluff, Tantras, and Procampur. He still owns "The Unlucky Dwarf," a modest tavern in Procampur named for the unfortunate fellow who lost it in a poker game several years ago. After an aborted attempt to run the establishment himself, Matasian returned the bar to its former

ROD OF TYMORA BLEYS BURRIMGLARD

Human male 8th level Luckbringer

Age: 42	Alignment: CG
Height: 5'10"	Weight: 250 pounds
Hair: Brown	Eyes: Brown

Burrimglard is the temple theologian and teacher of the acolytes. He also offers guidance to adventurers, often meeting with them in private rooms above the gambling halls. Bleys, a strong opponent of evil corruption, is the shepherd of the temple's outreach program, encouraging the citizens of Ravens Bluff to understand that Tymora takes a personal interest in the city. He catalogs the reports of encounters with avatars of Tymora and is slowly writing a book entitled "Ravens Bluff — Child of Tymora." Bleys has a secret hope that some day The Hall of Luck will be as famous as the Lady's House in Arabel.

The Rod of Tymora is a large, fat man who dresses in deep blues (wags refer to him as a giant blueberry). He has a passion for being bold which unfortunately does not

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BEST NEW DECATHLON EVENT

Deadline: July 31

First place:	4 points
Second place:	2 points
Participation:	1 point

Results posted by August 25

We liked the results of this event so much, we are running it again. Propose a Decathlon event of any kind, in the format shown in this article. It can be as wild as you want, but it must be something a club can do, preferably something that takes more than one person to accomplish. We'll make the best events part of next year's competition.

MONSTER MASH, REDUX

Deadline: August 31

First place:	4 points
Second place:	2 points
Participation:	1 point

Results posted by September 15

So you've trained your monster, seen your monster in action, and maybe seen it gored to death and eaten. Now tell us about it. Write an account of how your monster fared at the GEN CON Monster Mash Kill-A-Thon. Humorous, dark and gritty, loaded with pathos, however you want to tell its story. We'll publish the best accounts in POLYHEDRON.

BEST NEW FAITH FOR THE DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS GAME

Deadline: September 30

First Place:	4 points
Second Place:	2 points
Participation:	1 point

Results posted by October 13

The release of 3rd Edition D&D® in August provides the impetus for this event. Using the guidelines presented in the PHB and DMG, design a god and its priesthood. Impress us, but don't bore us with another iteration of a published god, with no restrictions and an overly powerful specialty priesthood. Winners will be published in POLYHEDRON.

SERVICE EVENTS

We have re-examined what service means to us, and some events that in previous years would be classified as tournament play now appear here. Service to the Network entails adding value to the RPGA, and to the hobby in general. By promoting good play, and good judging, we enrich not only ourselves, but those we wish to bring into the Network, as well.

With this in mind, we present the following events. Although the data used to score these events is tracked automatically by the database, no Decathlon points will be given unless a club submits entries for them before the end of the service period.

MOST TOURNAMENT ROUNDS JUDGED

Event Periods: January 1 to April 30, May 1 to August 31, September 1 to November 30

First place:	4 points
Second place:	2 points
Participation:	1 point

Results posted by: 1st period-July 1st; 2nd period November 1st. Points for the third period won't be posted until announcement of Decathlon winners.

All rounds of scored and posted Network events judged by club members during the event period qualify. Don't worry about writing on the scoring packet; we'll find judging occurrences by RPGA number. As with last year, this event is normalized by club size, so the results will be in terms of average number of rounds judged per club member. All rounds judged by club members will be considered, as long as results are processed by the dates. Points will be awarded for each of the three periods listed above. The delays in posting for periods are to allow us time to process scoring packs from all conventions. If results have not been returned by the reporting date for the period in which they were judged, they will not be counted toward this event.

MOST TOURNAMENTS OTHER THAN LIVING CAMPAIGNS PLAYED BY CLUB MEMBERS

Event Period: January 1st to November 30th

First place:	6 points
Second place:	4 points
Participation:	1 point

Results posted with the overall results

All tables of any RPGA tournament other than LIVING campaign events count toward this category, no matter the placement. This includes all classic events, tournaments played at retail locations which are not set in LIVING campaigns, and special club-only tournaments. Judging instances do not apply. The results will be averaged over club size as of December 15th, so the results will be posted in terms of average non-LIVING events per club member.

MOST MEMBERS PLAYING IN THE LIVING GREYHAWK CAMPAIGN

Event period: August 10th through November 30th

First place:	5 points
Second place:	3 points
Participation:	1 point

Results posted with the overall results

We want people to join us in the biggest shared-world campaign ever. No one has ever attempted tabletop campaigning on the scale we envision, and we would like to reward your participation in this exciting new project. We are looking for the highest percentage of club members playing in the campaign. All you need is one experience as either a player or judge in the campaign. Results will be pulled from instances received by December 1st, and averaged by club size. ■

See page 11 for a list of conventions featuring Decathlon Tournament Play.

exclude boldly seizing generous helpings of food and drink. Yet his mind remains keen, his voice loud, and his heart big. Burrimglard is never without his holy symbol or his symbol of office, a blue and silver three-foot rod. Rumor is that the rod is charged with Tymora's *Luckbolts*.

LORD PRIEST PERNOIR LA NOVAK

Halfling male 9th level Cleric

Age: 35	Alignment: CG
Height: 3'1"	Weight: 62 pounds
Hair: Blonde	Eyes: Grey

Pernoir La Novak is in charge of the temple's gambling halls and teaching games of chance to the temple priests and worshippers. Pernoir might be the best gambler in the city. He has spent a little time in some of Ravens Bluff's gambling houses to watch and evaluate the local talent, but he did not game enough to give away any of his talents. He also visits the halfling pantheon temple in the Hallowed Halls to preach on Tymora, firmly convinced that Tymora's true form is that of a halfling.

Pernoir is very handsome. He wears white silks exclusively, accentuated by one of several colored sashes. He has a very foreign accent, which is impossible to place; he made it up. He moved to Ravens Bluff just over six years ago.

LADY OF THE TOMES ALAMANDRA WILFUEL RIDA

Human female 7th level Cleric
Age: 52
Alignment: NG
Height: 5'1"
Weight: 104 pounds
Hair: Red
Eyes: Green

Rida is in charge of the temple library and all relics within it. She has specialized in the analysis of relics of Tymora and in the theory of chaos. Alamandra is an avid reader and a bit of a wallflower. Although many mature men in Ravens Bluff consider her quite attractive, she seldom leaves her beloved books and relics, except to paint scenes in the gambling houses and the Halls of Hazards.

Alamandra favors flowing clothes in greens.

LUCKBENDER RALOGLIIR MERCYHAND ("THE EDGE OF THE COIN")

Human male 8th level Paladin

Age: 56	Alignment: LG
Height: 6'4"	Weight: 204 pounds
Hair: Brown	Eyes: Black

Mercyhand trains and leads the warriors that protect the temple and the clergy. He does not carry a single magical item, preferring to trust the will Tymora. Luckbender often walks the neighborhood streets, breaking up fights and discouraging criminals.

Ralogliir wears plate mail when on patrol (he is not reckless) and handsome doublets of browns and blues when attending social events.

GERRAN "CHANCE" LOMAS

Human male 6th level Luckbringer

Age: 28	Alignment: CG
Height: 5'11"	Weight: 180 pounds
Hair: Black	Eyes: Brown

Lomas is a young man, full of life. He cheerfully performs the duties of meeting with and healing the town's adventurers and listens to their exploits in awe. But Gerran seldom speaks of his own adventures in the War, serving in the medical corps on a wall of Ravens Bluff, or of the demise of his fellow priests Trevan Greenriver and Hylar Hauftop when they leaped off the battlements to slow giants from climbing the wall. Now and then, a shadow of pain appears in his eyes and he is reminded of that test of faith. Were his friends reckless, or was he too cautious?

Chance typically is attired in a blue doublet with a silver sash.

GALEN MCLORK

Human male 3rd level Luckbringer
Age: 25
Alignment: CN
Height: 6'0"
Weight: 170 pounds
Hair: Auburn Eyes: Grey

Galen is the assistant Keeper of the Tomes, but he ventures out of the temple far more than Rida. McLork is proud of his avocation as a Luckbringer and is determined to spread the word of Tymora throughout the city. He often can be found on street corners, preaching the word of his goddess. He is not subtle and at times his passion has exceeded his wisdom. He has been known to make fun of the recent disasters at the Silver Halls, Ravens Bluff's temple of Tyr. Galen is a strong believer in the rights of the individual and views government as a stifling influence.

McLork dresses in very rich, elegant attire, presenting a distinguished appearance. ■

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I remember Oeble, all right. The only place I've shared an inn bunkroom with a kenku, a wemic, a lamia clad from talons to fingertips in full barded plate armor that she never took off, and a manscorpion. I was quite surprised to find all of us alive and unharmed in the morning.

Halderstone Dree
A ranger of Cormyr
In conversation with Volo
Year of the Arch

This month's installment of our tour of the Border Kingdoms completes our look at the perilous but fascinating town of Oeble.

One last note about the Underways: open slave-dealing and fencing of stolen goods can be observed at any corner or passage-moot in this subterranean level of Oeble, and there are persistent rumors of a mage dwelling somewhere in its twisting ways who for fees spell-alters the features of outlaws or captives whose identities must be swiftly concealed.

THE RAINSPANS

Folk who find the Underways and the ground level not to their liking can move about between a few Oeblaun buildings along the "Rainspans," a network of crumbling bridges that leap from rooftops to balconies and even right into the upper floors of such structures as Griffingate House, the large, ornate old inn that stands in the center of Oeble.

It's now illegal to leap or cause another being to fall from the Rainspans, or to drop or throw any object from them—but that doesn't stop darts, rocks, and (of course) knives from being hurled down from the heights with deadly accuracy.

THE STREETS

Oeble is a maze of walled courtyards, rambling alleys, balconies, and lodgings stacked three or four floors high above street-level businesses that change with bewildering rapidity. There's little point in detailing businesses that move or change their names and owners every few months, but the most permanent features of Oeble deserve mention.

Important streets for the newcomer to remember are Alhan's Ride and Vriel's Walk, both of which cut north-south across the town, bridging the river. The third Oeblaun bridge, between Alhan's Span and Vriel's Leap, is the Arch of Gargoyles, which connects Laskalar's Square with the north bank of the Scelptar. All three spans are in a permanent state of crumbling disrepair, with great gaps in their deckings.

Other key Oeblaun routes are Dead King's Walk, which undulates like a lazy serpent (very roughly east-west) the length of town; and Oeble's two widest streets, which run diagonally south from Laskalar's Square (in different directions, one to the southeast and the other to the southwest), crossing Dead King's Walk and providing the fastest ways through the town. The westernmost of these (linking the southwestern edge of Oeble with the Square, to the northeast) is The Rolling Shields; the easternmost (connecting the southeastern edge of town and the Square to the northwest) is Balamonthar's Street.

Along the southeastern side of the meeting of The Rolling Shields with the Square stands the most imposing building in Oeble: the old, many-balconied, ornately-gargoyled inn of Griffingate House (Good/Expensive), which boasts a large (and deliberately anonymous) staff, many secret passages and spyholes, and a house guard of expert knife and club-hurlers. Each suite has its own bathtub, hot water is piped from fire-warmed tanks in the cellars, and the furnishings are luxurious.

The most infamous store of street-level Oeble is Skulls New And Used, an emporium that sells the gear, relics, and unwanted treasure findings of adventurers who've moved on . . . or passed on. This crammed, dusty labyrinth of odds and ends—mainly ends—is run by a shaggy mountain of a minotaur: Thoele Raervrun, a CN male F12, cursed into beast-shape by a wizard long ago, but retaining his own wits and speech. He goes about grumbling, clad in a dusty, decaying array of leather smiths' aprons, their pockets bulging with odd keys, string, knives and saws, hooks, candle-ends, and (if the tales are true) a *necklace of missiles* with only a few of its globes left (which he won't hesitate to employ in battle).

The shop is named for a row of skull drinking-cups salvaged from an orc chieftan's hall near the Shieldmaidens long ago. A

wide variety of "brainbones" from all manner of races, too old and cracked to hold liquid, they sit in the window for year after dusty year. One of them holds two minotaurs' fistfulls of glass marbles, which Thoele's been known to fling in the face (or under the feet) of would-be shop-thieves.

LAW AND ORDER

Oeble is ruled by the Faceless Master, a fat, always masked man whose hands bristle with rings said to harbor fell magic, with the assistance of an advisory Council of Nine Merchants (a bickering, money-grubbing bunch whom the Faceless Master always politely listens to and then largely ignores) and a force of thirty-plus "Gray Blades," a human and half-elven police force. Most Blades are outlaws from elsewhere who enjoy the good pay, chances to swagger, and the fringe benefits of good food, wine, and ardent companionship laid on by their Master. Like most law-enforcers everywhere, they are cordially disliked by the majority of Oeblar.

The Gray Blades may be indulged by their employer, but they are very good at their jobs, including spying at lofty windows, acrobatics, firing and catching hostile crossbow bolts as if with magic-aided deftness, and anticipating trouble before it actually erupts.

Few in town know that the raspy-voiced Master died some years ago, and is being impersonated by his former female chamber-slave, using padding and her natural gift for mimicry. She loves Oeble, and is always on watch for plots by other Border realms to raid or conquer it; much of her time is spent manipulating mercenary bands and competent adventurers to be nearby and ready to defend Oeble — without actually being paid to do so until they're really needed. The Master accomplishes this by endless rumors, offers of "little deals" that can only be made in Oeble, and so on; she's very good at this sort of intrigue.

The Faceless Master profits from the "lawless" reputation of the town by (fairly secretly) owning The Paeraddyn, a "safe" inn on the southern edge of Oeble that sports a stable, bathing house, gardens, minstrels' bower, and a heavily-policed "A Taste of Oeble" market all within its own walled compound. Bodyguards can be hired from the management by the hour, day, or night, and come in an impressive array of deadly-looking, overequipped brutes, most of them closing on eight or nine feet in height and all of them bristling with weapons.

Some folk stay at "the Paer" out of fear, some just to say they've been to Oeble, and some (the best "fences" for any stolen jewels the good citizens of Oeble just might have grown tired of, for instance) for the extra measure of security it provides. Every floor of the four-floor inn has its patrol masters, veteran fighters who command four living warriors and six helmed horrors each; the dining room attached to the lower two floors of the inn has its own patrol master, and the inn cellars contain more stored monsters for use against intruders or if things really get out of hand on the floors above.

THE WAY AHEAD

Oeble remains a thorn in the side of half a dozen Border rulers, and an everpresent "doorstep danger" to the realms around it—but it's also useful to everyone as a hiring-center, a "neutral ground" meeting place where one can expect to find outlaws on the run, misfits, monsters, and market for rare and unusual items.

"Too useful to destroy," as one now-dead High Duke of a certain Border realm once described Oeble, and his words remain true today. That's not to say some outside force desiring a seat of power in the Borders won't try to scour out Oeble from within and touch off a local war that destroys the town or reduces it to a mere shell. Yet this danger has hung over the town for a century or more, and not befallen yet.

The Faceless Master recently managed to counter a thinly-veiled annexation attempt by Talduth Vale, persuading both the Barony of Great Oak and Owlhold to inform authorities in the Vale that they smiled upon an independent Oeble — but would be forced to rise together with swords and flame to obliberate an Oeble that was an arm of Talduth Vale.

This is by no means the first time that Oeble has survived balanced at the heart of an uneasy ring of all-too-ready weapons, and probably wonít be the last. A Border prophecy insists that Oeble-town is the site where a dragon shall in time to come reveal the whereabouts of a truly mighty treasure of Faerûn. . . and though some folk dismiss this as mere invention devised to slow greedy Border rulers from giving orders to mount, ride, and burn out "the lawless upriver pestilence" once and for all, the ballad in which the prophecy is preserved is very old.

And so Oeble survives, a dangerous but very interesting place to visit and shop, fitting the image many outlanders have of the Border Kingdoms — and minding its reputation not a whit. ■

EVERWINKING EYE

BY ED GREENWOOD

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Glyphs of Devotion

BY GARY S. WATKINS

Pain erupted from a half-dozen wounds as Tarel pressed his back to the alleyway's cold exterior. The burning itch in the dagger cuts could only mean poison. Not much time, he thought, pulling a small silver disk from a hidden seam in his belt. He quietly mouthed the command to evoke the glyph inscribed on the disk and prayed it would be enough. A moment later the Westgate assassin that had been tracking him stepped into the alley expecting to find her quarry incapacitated and dying. Instead, she found a grim swordsman bearing no sign of his earlier injuries. The assassin suffered a moment's hesitation, but a moment was all it took for Tarel's blade to find its mark . . .

Mention the word glyph to players and images of searing flame striking from nowhere, numbing paralysis, and worse pass before their eyes. But glyphs can be more than magical wards. They can also serve as symbols of deitific favor to aid the invoker of the glyph's magic. When used in this manner, the spell *glyph of warding* is referred to as a *glyph of devotion*.

A *glyph of devotion* conforms to the *glyph of warding* spell in every way but its effects. The glyph may duplicate any one beneficent clerical spell that the character is capable of casting.

Typically, *glyphs of devotion* are charged with spells from the divination, healing, necromantic, or protection spheres, although the DM may allow other spheres at his discretion. Likely locations of *glyphs of devotion* include shrines, temples, and holy symbols. Adventuring parties in the service of a holy order might also be gifted with helpful glyph-dweomered items to aid them in their quests. *Glyphs of devotion* may be introduced into your campaign in any number of ways. The examples that follow assume a FORGOTTEN REALMS™ setting, but may be easily adapted for any game world.

TEMPLES' USE OF GLYPHS

Temples may incorporate *glyphs of devotion* into their daily rituals or as rewards for worthy individuals at festivals or holy days as illustrated below:

Tymora's Tithe - The priests of Tymora carry two baskets to collect the tithe. The first receives the offerings of the faithful. The second basket contains several white pebbles. Anyone making a donation may take a pebble. A few of the pebbles have been enchanted with invisible *glyphs of devotion*. The fortunate recipient of one of these lucky pebbles will instinctively know its power within a few minutes of grasping it. It's up to the DM to decide what form the luck will take, perhaps a bonus to a dice roll when the character really needs it, or maybe the pebble's owner will find a missing item, etc.

Milil's Musical Scrolls — The musician-priests of the Lord of Song occasionally inscribe scrolls with special songs for those who have performed a great service for the church or for those who have moved the priests with a particularly touching musical performance. The scroll is sealed with wax and the glyph of song is worked into the seal. When the seal is broken and the scroll unfurled, the notes of the beautiful song arise from the parchment. The song has the same effect as a bard's song, improving morale or saving throws, and negating music-based attacks. The scroll bearer may choose which bard's effect will be generated at will, though once chosen it can not be changed. If a bard uses such a scroll in conjunction with his own singing, the effects are cumulative. The scroll's song lasts one turn plus two rounds per level of the inscribing priest.

SPECIAL GLYPHS

Additionally, certain deities provide their priests with special glyph spells that reflect the god's unique nature. These glyphs are only available to followers of the specified religion. The list of examples that follow is by no means exhaustive. DMs are encouraged to create additional glyphs for other faiths in their campaign.

Lathander's Candle — Any undead creature coming within 30 feet of one of these glyphs suffers 1d6 points of damage per round while in its radius of effect. The glyph only activates at the approach of undead and will persist for as many activations or rounds as the casting priest has levels, glowing brightly when activated.

Mystra's Spellblessing — A stable magic region is created in a dead or wild magic zone when this glyph is activated. The glyph remains dormant until a spell is cast within a distance of 10 yards per level of the glyph's caster. When this occurs the glyph acts to enrich or dampen the effects of the local environment, enabling spells to be cast normally. Once activated, the spellblessing lasts one turn per level of the casting priest.

Tempus' Rage — This glyph is always cast upon a melee weapon and is activated by the next successful combat strike made with that weapon. Tempus' rage duplicates the berserker rage granted power (see p. 34, FORGOTTEN REALMS® ADVENTURES™) except that it only affects the weapon wielder and lasts one round per level of the casting priest.

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MAINTAINING BALANCE

A *glyph of devotion* is a very potent spell, and its use should be monitored carefully. If, as a DM, you feel the spell would give priest characters too much of an edge or would imbalance the campaign, then limit it to NPC clerics or don't use it at all! On the other hand, if you decide to introduce *glyphs of devotion* into your campaign, here are a few suggestions to prevent players from abusing them.

First, don't automatically grant the spell to a priest character just because he asks for it. It's not called a *glyph of devotion* for nothing! Use it to reward good roleplaying and a player's attention to his priest character's ethos. If a priest hasn't been exemplary in his faith then he doesn't deserve a glyph of devotion. These spells are special boons from one's deity. Any god would take a very dim view of a servant who asked for such a precious gift only to sell the charged glyph for personal gain. Neither would a priest who stockpiled glyphs to increase his power be tolerated. To put it into game terms: a priest who has furthered his deity's cause and performed his duties well should be granted a *glyph of devotion* if he prays for it and intends to use it in his work. Another worthwhile request would be if the glyph were intended as a reward to someone who had done a great service for the PC's church. Such requests, if made only occasionally, should pose no threat to a well-ordered campaign.

Likely locations of *glyphs of devotion* include shrines, temples, and holy symbols. Adventuring parties in the service of a holy order might also be gifted with helpful glyph-dweomered items to aid them in their quests.

If a priest petitions his god too often, or wants a glyph spell when he still holds one uncast, the higher powers may become annoyed. The gifts of the gods are not to be taken for granted. For every glyph of devotion a priest prays for while having one of his own already charged, there is a cumulative chance equal to 5% times the priest's level that the deity's minions will notice and punish the priest. Glyphs sold for personal gain count against this total as well. Punishment may consist of the loss of spells, a minor quest to atone, a loss of experience, or a combination of these things. At the very least, the priest will lose any glyphs he currently holds and will be unable to request any more until he has regained his standing with his god.

For example, some time past Liorn received a *glyph of devotion* which he used to charge his holy symbol with an *augury* spell. He still hasn't cast the *augury*, but feels like he could use a little extra help for his next adventure, so he prays for another *glyph of devotion*. Liorn's been active in his priestly duties so the DM allows him to ask for a glyph. The DM then rolls percentile dice getting a 52. This is higher than the 35% chance of failure possible (5% x 7 (Liorn's experience level)) so the spell is granted. Liorn got away with it this time! If he were feeling cocky and prayed for another *glyph of devotion* the chance of incurring Oghma's wrath would be 70%. A third request while the other glyphs existed would be doomed with a 105% chance of failure.

Finally, since *glyphs of devotion* essentially create temporary magic items, the DM may elect to restrict their use in other ways. He may require that only objects of the finest materials will be suitable for enchantment. The financial burden incurred may encourage priest characters to request glyphs only when they really need them. A character class limitation to allow only priests or individuals specified at the time of the glyph's creation is another option. Alternately, the charged item may retain the priest's alignment and may be useable only by others of like alignment (good, neutral, or evil). These limitations are very restrictive, so it is recommended that they only be used for very abusive characters.

Glyphs of devotion might give characters a little extra clerical aid when they need it most or provide enemies with a second wind just when the PCs thought they had the battle won. As the DM, it is up to you to determine how, or if, this versatile spell fits into your campaign. Use or discard the above suggestions as you see fit or introduce a new wrinkle of your own. Above all, have fun.

. . . Mishak felt her lifeblood ebbing away as she watched the ranger Tarel disappear into the city's dark streets. "Fool," she thought, "should have finished the job. Khahir!" *A spidery, violet pattern glowed forth from the unholy symbol concealed beneath her tunic. The light flowed from the talisman to the bubbling gash in her chest, filling it with new vitality. Mishak rose, a darker shadow against the night, and once again the hunt was on.* ■

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Powers that Be: Xan Yae

SUPREME MISTRESS OF PETALS

BY LANCE HAWVERMALE

To look upon the face of Xan Yae is to look upon the dusk.

As the Baklunish goddess of mystery and furtive excursions, discipline and shade, Xan Yae teaches her disciples to call upon the power of the mind to mentally commune with the grand and spinning symmetry of the multiverse. In the twilight hours of Oerth, when the glory of the day yields to the danger of the night, Xan Yae summons her believers and instructs them in the curious geometry of shadows and the hidden riddles of stealth.

As the Supreme Mistress of Petals, Xan Yae is the deity of monks and martial artists, as well as those who call the shadows their home. Thieves elicit her favor when orchestrating clandestine affairs, as do sages when contemplating the vast and immeasurable power of the human mind. Though her worshippers in the Flanaess are few, often taking residence in monasteries on the rim of civilization, the breadth of her influence is felt as far away as distant stars. Wherever shadows flow and twilight divides night and day, she is there.

The great wheel of Xan Yae's doctrine depends upon three vital and interconnected spokes: the Universal Mind, the Perpetual Harmony, and the Internal Peace. The concept of the Universal Mind posits the belief that all things exist because the mind created them, and without imagination, consideration, and willpower, the multiverse would cease to exist. This tenet agrees closely with the primary contention of the Outer Planar faction known as the Sign of One. Like the Signers, followers of Xan Yae believe in the malleability of creation and the ability of the mind to alter reality. In the ultimate expression of the faith, believers hope to one day use their collective mental faculties to transform the very shape of the multiverse.

XAN YAE

Lady of Perfection, Supreme Mistress of Petals

Lesser Power of the Outlands, N

Portfolio: Twilight, Shadows, Stealth, Mind over Matter

Domain Name: Outlands/Tower of the Iron Will

Superior: None

Allies: Rexfelis (Catlord), Zuoken

Foes: Pholtus, Pyremius

Symbol: Black lotus blossom

The idea of Perpetual Harmony contends that all life is balanced, that symmetry governs all beings, and that to be in harmony with one's self and surroundings puts one in harmony with nature. This in turn permits one to more readily access the Universal Mind.

Finally, to manipulate the Universal Mind and maintain Perpetual Harmony, one must first achieve Internal Peace. In other words, both martial and mental activities must be mastered and reconciled to attain a higher level of existence. Thus, followers of Xan Yae perform both physical and mental exercises in an ongoing effort to find inner alignment.

Seeing this tendency toward balance, it is no wonder that dusk is considered to be Xan Yae's holiest hour. All church rituals are performed during twilight; clerics voice their daily prayers for spells at this time. Xan Yae espouses stealth because to move without being detected requires both discipline and skill. There is no cause for flamboyance or wasted energy in the doctrine of the Mistress of Perfection. All movements are economic and precise.

Xan Yae cares little for the bickering between gods, and even less for the petty plights of men. In order to salvage existence from both the zealous efforts of good and the inexorable tug of evil, Xan Yae works within the shadows to strengthen the fragile balance between darkness and light. Xan Yae charges the monks, priests, and psionicists who worship her with the quiet task of seeking out the extremes of good and evil and tempering them with harmony. Xan Yae is not a passive power, but actively pursues an agenda which will ensure the ongoing stability of life.

Xan Yae has been known to walk the mortal avenues of Oerth in the guise of either an acrobat or a martial artist. In either role she is never without her matching falchion swords — the fabled Butterfly Blades — though she often keeps these weapons concealed on her person. While assuming human form, Xan Yae whispers in the ears of old men, quickens the pulse of the young, and conducts in twilight that which cannot be achieved by day.

Xan Yae counts amongst her enemies Pyremius and Pholtus, as both promulgate radical ideals in the name of either despicable evil or unwavering good. Both gods, either through fire or light, illuminate the darkness so sacred to her teachings. Her allies are few, due entirely to the fact that the Supreme Mistress is too self-involved to concern herself with the affairs of her fellow deities. Her chiefmost ally is the demigod Zuoken. The Catlord, Rexfelis, is a frequent companion.

The church of Xan Yae recognizes two days of holy significance. The first of these, the Autumn Equinox, celebrates the exact balance between the hours of daylight and the hours of night. Two ceremonies of worship are performed on this day, one at dawn and one at dusk, during which neophyte followers are initiated into the greater church body. Another important ritual is practiced on the 27th of Harvester, known as the Day of the Legion Will. From sunrise to sunset, every member of the church enters into his or her deepest and most profound meditative state, wielding every bit of discipline they possess in an effort to touch the Universal Mind. The idea behind this mass meditation is to use the collective will of the church body to alter the fabric of reality. It is believed that the Supreme Mistress grows substantially in power during this time, as the Universal Mind is bent closer to her control.

Xan Yae is a favored deity of many among the periphery

of Baklunish society, and has many adherents in the Distant West, where the struggle for harmony is oftentimes both a religion and a way of life. In these lands a distinct martial arts style has been developed around the faith, known as the Way of the Lotus, practiced by peasants and princes alike. Xan Yae is venerated by scholars and swordmasters, shadow mages and smugglers, psionicists, philosophers, and mystics.

The Supreme Mistress is served by creatures of all alignments, both magical and mundane, as addresses her needs at the time. She has been known to employ shadows, translators, great cats, and jade dragons. The appearance of a blood hawk at dusk is said to be a good omen by those wise to the precepts of the goddess, while a thunderstorm at sunrise is thought to portent of Xan Yae's displeasure with those who encounter it.

SPECIALTY PRIESTS (D'AI SHATON)

Requirements: Wis 14
Prime Req.: Wisdom
Alignment: N, LN
Weapons: Falchion, quarterstaff, lasso, dart, sai, chain
Armor: None
Major Spheres: All, Astral, Charm, Divination, Law, Numbers, Thought, Time
Minor Spheres: Healing, Protection
Magical Items: as clerics
Req. Profs: Falchion
Bonus Profs: Tumbling, Religion (Baklunish)

GRANTED POWERS

D'ai shaton may purchase rogue proficiencies at no additional cost.

At the discretion of the DM, all priests of Xan Yae add an additional +5 to the result of a check to determine if the priest will possess a psionic Wild Talent (see Player's Option™: Skills and Powers, p. 155). This check must be made upon character creation.

At 1st level, d'ai shaton gain the ability to move silently as a thief of the same level.

At 3rd level, d'ai shaton may elect to use continuing specialization in an unarmed fighting style as a warrior of the same level.

At 5th level, d'ai shaton may resist *ESP* or thought-reading magic by making a save vs. death magic at +1.

At 7th level, d'ai shaton become immune to all non-magical diseases.

At 9th level, d'ai shaton can cast the spell *shadow door* (as the 5th level wizard spell) once per day.

At 14th level, d'ai shaton can cast the spell *shadowcat* (as the 7th level wizard spell) once per day.■

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Practical Tournament play

BY TOM PRUSA WITH ROBERT WIESE

"Joe, we've been roleplaying with the tavern wench for almost an hour. Can't we go check out what she told us?"

"No, I want to finish this conversation, because what color I wear is important, and I want to see how my appearance is affecting her."

Different styles of roleplaying can sometimes cause dissension among the players in tournament play. Some want to get on with the action, while others want to revel in the interaction. Everyone is different, and wants different things from their roleplaying experience. Since the game is group-oriented, here are some tips for judges and players to help everyone have a good time together.

TIPS FOR PLAYERS

1. Remember that there are (generally) five other players at the table. No matter what kind of character you design (campaign) or select (classic), keep in mind that everyone is here to have a good time, together. In designing a character, choose character traits that make working with other people possible. Nothing says you can't be an anti-social loner. However, that character should then recognize that he's stuck with his current companions, at least for now. Maybe you complain about it, but whatever you do, do it with them. If you are handed an anti-social or terribly shy classic character, you have to put a different spin on it. Maybe he's a part of the adventuring group because these are the only people he trusts. Maybe he doesn't like them, but their help is the only way he'll rescue Uncle Dragonbane from the ogres. Find a reason to work with the party.

2. Don't split up the party. This is just a guideline, but splitting the party is generally a bad idea. Doing so does a number of things, most of them bad. It forces the DM to split his time between you and the rest of the party, it detracts from the roleplaying with the other characters, and it can spoil the whole group experience. Also, if you're playing a LIVING CITY™ or RAVENLOFT™ adventure, it can get you killed. Just find a different spin. Your barbarian may have no patience, but no one exhibits one character trait to the exclusion of others all the time. He shouldn't just jump on his horse and ride off into the adventure, leaving the rest of the party behind.

3. Urge other characters to participate. One of the best examples of this occurred a few years back at a Gen Con® Game Fair benefit tournament. The table consisted of five players at their first Gen Con, and Don Bingle, the current National Champion. All were playing kings, in the module "It's Good to Be King." Don could have dominated this table, sliding to an easy win. Instead, when the round started, he said; "It seems that we are all important people in our own lands, good at making decisions. I suggest that we all take turns making decisions." He turned to the player on his left and said, "Perhaps you should make the first decision. Exactly which gate do you think we should go through?" The young player, who had been completely quiet, stammered out an answer. Don treated this as a kingly pronouncement, and it wasn't long before the young player was acting like a king. Soon, everyone was arguing, trading kingly insults, and playing in character. They continued around the table, giving each player his moment in the sun, and the round finished with six animated, involved players. Don won the table, but as the judge, I voted him first more for his efforts at involving other players than the actual (excellent) roleplaying he did.

This is important, and the players recognized as the best roleplayers are good at this. The table is there for everyone to have fun. That means everyone, not four or five out of six. Everyone. If someone is really out of things, do what you can to get them involved. It doesn't always work out, people get tired, or maybe they don't feel well. But get them involved if you can. Most people will thank you later.

TIPS FOR JUDGES

1. Share your time. One of the most important functions of a GM is to get everyone involved. A good rule of thumb is that you should speak to each player at the table at least once every ten minutes. Obviously, different situations can change this, but if you've spent 10 minutes dealing with the thief sneaking into a tower, you should now spend the next 50 with the other players at the table. As a GM, you have more control over this than the players do, so you have more of a responsibility.

2. Involve the quiet players. If someone is having a hard time getting into the game, perhaps the next NPC they meet really only wants to talk to her. Many modules address this, telling you to pick someone who has not been involved much for a specific encounter. In some cases, the player just won't go with it, no matter what you do. But in many others, a momentary spot in the limelight may be all the player needs to get her character going. As the DM, you owe her the chance to get involved.

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3. Watch the loners. A player who insists his character works best alone may be perfectly in character, but he is adding nothing to the group, and very little to the game. He needs to become involved in the group. Under no circumstances should you allow him to go forward and experience all of the encounters first, while the rest of the table watches him have fun. There are a number of tricks to get a split party back together. Ralph may be charging ahead of the party when he comes to a sign with two directions on it. But Ralph can't read. He has to wait until Fred comes up to translate. Fred may be intent on questioning another mage about a spell, while the rest of the party waits. The other mage remembers an appointment with his hairdresser; and has to leave right now. Using the module is always the best way. Tweak the next encounter so that Ralph has to wait until the rest of the party shows up before he can go on.

Another trick is called time dilation. If the rogue wants to use her ring of water walking to cross the river and search the cabin for treasure while the rest of the party is building a raft, change the time required for both tasks. Thus, the party can chop down trees, build a raft, ford the river, and reach the cottage just a round or two after the rogue has gotten the chest open. You can also introduce distractions. Maybe the river is so swift she is swept downstream a mile before she can cross. If you do this, make sure it's fair. The rogue might not be able to pocket all the loot unobserved, but if opening the chest releases a pair of spectres to attack, the party should show up just in time to save her from undeath.

4. Consider PC extra-adventure contacts as they come along. Some characters, especially in the Living City campaign, have three dozen contacts. The module says nothing about these contacts, but the character wants to check them. Give him a minor reward, perhaps some knowledge that is hinted at in the module's judge introduction. It should not be enough to avoid an entire encounter, just a bit of extra knowledge. The simplest way to handle something like this is not to roleplay it. Someone may say; "I'll check at the Thieves Guild, I'll talk to Fircas at the docks, and I'll check in with the bartender at the Lazy Spoon." Rather than taking a half-hour to roleplay this in detail, take the player aside and summarize the information that he gets. Then bring the action back to the table. It helps to point such characters back at the adventure. Reward the character with the contacts — that's why he has them — but don't take a lot of time roleplaying the information gathering while the rest of the party has to sit and discuss the foibles of *The Phantom Menace*.

Of course, if it's the whole party who insists on going all those places, that's different. Let them spend as long as they want at the Lazy Spoon. But that should be a group decision. Try to avoid taking a long time on encounters that deal with only one or two of the players, especially if the effect on the module is minimal.

5. Get a feel for the table early on. Different players want different things from their roleplaying. Some tables really want to complete the adventure; accomplishing objectives is their goal. Others may have only one goal, to roleplay their characters to the hilt, and the adventure can take care of itself. Try to pick up on the mood of a group as soon as you can, then go with the flow.

Some players will want different things at the same table. The only fair thing to do in this case is split your time evenly. Roleplay a couple of encounters to the hilt, then move them through a few encounters quickly. Take note of time remaining, as well. If some of the party is frustrated at not getting anywhere, the simple statement "there's only an hour left in the slot" might wake up the rest of the players. If they don't care, that's fine, but at least you warned them.

Once in a while, you'll even end up with a conflict between characters, where two players are so into their roles that they figuratively begin to butt heads. If the players are about to reach the red-faced screaming phase, it's time to call a quick break. A few minutes away from the table will give everyone a chance to calm down and cooler heads can prevail.

In conclusion, it is important to remember the practical aspects of roleplaying games. Roleplaying is only the second most important part of the experience; the first is to have fun. Sometimes you have to step out of your character (or in front of the screen) and look at how things are going. "We have an hour left in the slot, we're supposed to sail across the sea, and we haven't even hired a ship. Maybe our debate on the nature of druid magic could be continued after we set sail." Obviously that statement is not done in character, but it might still need to be said. ■

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Welcome to the Marybelle Visitor's Information Grid.

General Information

Cities

Businesses

General Information

Planetary Attributes

Gravity (G2): 0.9 g
Gravity: 2
Radiation: 1
Atmosphere: 3
Pressure: 3 (0.9 atm)
Heat: 2
Mass: 0.8
Orbital Distance: 0.85 AU
Diameter: 12,000 km
Year: 292.19 days = 273.93 Earth days = 0.75 Earth years
Day: 22.5 hours
Axial Tilt: 16 degrees
Density: 0.96 (5.3 g/cc)
Crust: no heavy metal enrichment
Satellites: 3 small moons

Cities

The growing population of Marybelle supports four cities, protected from the hostile environment by habitat domes.

New Helena: This thriving pyramidal metropolis is the capital of Marybelle, and home to both the planetary and system government. Visitors will find a modern spaceport, several museums and archives, the headquarters of the Verge Confederation, and numerous other attractions.

Dryrock: Founded by early miners, Dryrock is an industrious, blue-collar mining town built on a cliff above Marybelle's recently formed oceans.

Julnor: This small underwater mining colony is home to Marybelle's infamous prison, Shaft 3F, a worked-out mine made profitable only through rigorous enforced labor. Many hardened criminals of the Argos system consider imprisonment at Julnor a step away from a death sentence.

Pinnacle: Heavily influenced by its corporate sponsors, Pinnacle is actually four separate cities (Pinnacle, Athens, Prometheus, and Carthage) arranged in a tetrahedral pattern on a mountaintop.

In addition to the four major cities, Marybelle boasts numerous other sites of interest such as Cloudtower, Marybelle's off-world communications planetary grid and news center; Fort Benevideze, headquarters for Marybelle's military; and numerous small towns and settlements throughout the Outlands (anywhere outside one of the four major cities).

Marybelle Visitor's Information Grid

An Intoduction to the LIVING VERGE Compiled by Phil Tobin

Marybelle (and the Argos system in general) is a land of opportunity. It attracts many beings; hard-working individuals out to make new lives for themselves and their families, and even those criminal beings who would prey upon others. Criminal predators are only one of the reasons Marybelle needs heroes, because there are even greater dangers and threats. The Argos system lies not to far from the frontier of the Verge. Beyond that lies the unknown and the domains of such terrifying creatures as the Kroath, Klicks, and worse. Perhaps even more insidious than hostile aliens are those persons of power within the government of Marybelle or one of the powerful Stellar Nations, who see other beings as pawns to be manipulated and disposed of in order to achieve their own selfish goals.

Marybelle and the Argos system offer Alternity® Star*Drive™ player characters an opportunity; the opportunity to become heroes.

All visitors and immigrants to Marybelle in the Argos system must register at the Port of Entry giving name, occupation, and expected length of stay. Visas are granted for one Concord year, with one-year renewals provided at the City Government Building.

Once a forbidding, inhospitable planet, the process of terraforming Marybelle has been progressing for more than 100 years. Though the effort remains very much a work-in-progress, Marybelle's blue sky and brilliant sunsets seem to suggest that the atmosphere will be breathable in the relatively near future. Other parameters are already in the habitable range: radiation is low, and the temperature remains between -50° and +50° Celsius. Although the air outside the domes is still too toxic to support animal life, the planet's oceans and land support a variety of plant life and micro-organisms.

The Argos system is of value and interest to outsiders for a variety of reasons:

- It is a common milepost for travelers moving from the center of the Verge to its edge.
- It is near Aegis, one of the wealthiest, most contested, and developed Verge systems.
- It is home of the Verge Confederation Headquarters.
- It is a frontier land of nearly equal opportunity for all beings and species.

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Please make a selection from the following menu:

Weapons & Cyberware

Law & the Legal System

Businesses

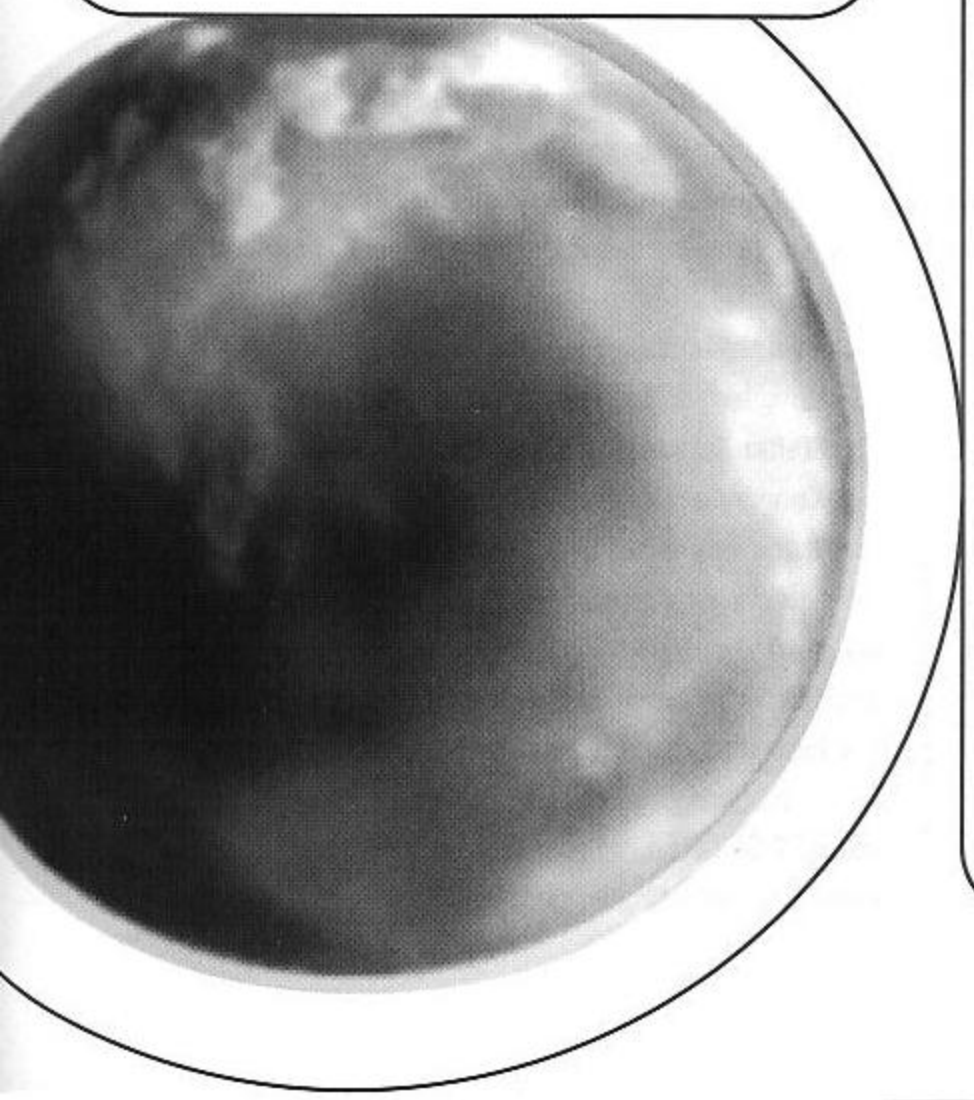
Visitors can find several major businesses on Marybelle. Corporations such as Insight, VoidCorp, the Redman-Smith Trading Group, AMI (Argos Military Industries), Better Worlds Incorporated, and Whitenoise Communications all have branch offices or headquarters here. The planetary government protects and encourages local industry through tariffs, quotas, and other preferential agreements.

Products not produced within the Argos system cost 120% the standard price.

Weapon & Cyberware Restrictions

In order to better ensure the safety of Marybelle's visitors and citizens, the local government enforces certain weapons and cyberware restrictions. While its frontier heritage has resulted in a society that allows individuals to carry weapons visibly, military and restricted weapons are prohibited, and licenses are required for controlled weapons. Only authorized law enforcement agents may carry weapons of any sort while in schools, hospitals, or government buildings. Punishment for first offenses is usually a fine. While many cyberware items are available and permitted on Marybelle, offensive cyberware is not encouraged, and is not permitted within city limits. Ownership of military and restricted cyberware is illegal.

Criminals in possession of weapons and/or cyberware are dealt with harshly, so as to minimize risk to law enforcement personnel.



Marybellen Law and Legal System

Marybelle is peaceful and safe, but no society is perfect, and the recent rapid population growth has led to some criminal activity.

The Marybellen legal system recognizes four categories of crime:
1) **Misdemeanors** (minor theft, drunk and disorderly conduct)
2) **Grand Crimes** (theft of high expense, destruction)
3) **Capital Crimes** (murder, treason, conspiracy)
4) **Crimes Against Humanity** (war, genocide)

Punishment varies depending upon the category and severity of the crime. In the case of misdemeanors and grand crimes, the sentenced individual must serve the community in some fashion, either through fines or community service. More severe crimes warrant more severe punishments, including long-term hard labor or community service in addition to incarceration. Death sentences are generally reserved for truly dangerous criminals, such as mass murderers, terrorists, or individuals caught threatening the life support systems of a habitat dome.

Currently, Marybelle and the Argos system have extradition agreements only with the Aegis system. Cases involving other non-Marybellen individuals are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Marybelle reserves the sovereign right to punish individuals who commit crimes within the Argos system.

Law enforcement on Marybelle takes several different forms. Standard police forces operate from Justice Control Stations located throughout civilized regions. The bulk of the police force is comprised of deputies; patrol and security officers. Fewer in number, Sheriffs act to supervise and coordinate the activities of the deputies. In cases where a crime has no obvious suspect, or further investigation is required, a Detective is called. The most elite of the law enforcement personnel are the enigmatic Marshals. The general populace knows very little about the Marshals; they ride heavily armored skybikes, wear body armor, and speak with computer-generated voices. They all appear to be identical, and are protected from criminal retribution by their anonymity. Their exact number is uncertain, but it has been reported that there is approximately one marshal per five thousand residents of any Marybelle city.

Individuals living outside the cities are not entirely without protection from criminals. In order to enforce the law and protect the Outlanders, the Citizens of the Outlands pooled their resources to create the Outrider cavalry. The Outriders are a small (fewer than 100 on-duty officers at any one time) mobile force. The cavalry uses a motley assortment of sky cars and hoverbikes, along with two support/repair facilities that resemble huge treaded fortresses. ■

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Living Verge™ Hero Creation Rules

The Living Verge (LV) hero creation rules are assembled by the RPGA to promote an enjoyable format for a tournament campaign using the ALTERNITY® game system published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. The campaign is set in the STAR*DRIVE® campaign setting and uses the ALTERNITY core rules, modified by the guidelines outlined below. For rules questions, it is assumed that if a rule is not listed in the allowable guides below, it is not part of the campaign at this time. LV is truly a "living" setting, and periodic rules upgrades and expansions will be announced in POLYHEDRON®.

The action of the LV campaign takes place on the frontier planet Marybelle, in the Argos system of the Verge.

ESSENTIAL RULES

PROGRESS LEVEL

The Argos system is considered a PL 7 campaign setting, with new Gravity Age technology slowly but steadily being deployed to the frontier. As such, all of the equipment available to starting heroes must be PL7 or below.

THE VERGE CONFEDERATION (VC)

The Verge Confederation is described in the Star*Drive® campaign setting (page 90). Within the LV campaign, all heroes work for this organization, which serves as a type of talent agency within the Verge. Heroes will be able to refuse any contract or job at their discretion. This allegiance has the following game effects:

* A credit line for initial purchase of equipment is established. See the Starting Funds section of these rules for details.
* Heroes who perform criminal actions may be expelled from the VC and thus removed from the campaign.
* The VC may also provide equipment or services needed to perform assigned missions.

ALLOWABLE BOOKS

The hero creation rules for LV utilize the *Player's Handbook* (PHB), *Gamemaster Guide* (GMG), the STAR*DRIVE (SD) Campaign Book, and the STAR*DRIVE *Arms & Equipment guide* (A&EG). All exceptions are included below. If two books contain conflicting rules, the SD (primary) and PHB (secondary) rules are considered the dominant rules sources. Articles from *DRAGON® Magazine* and other ALTERNITY source books can be used for role-playing background; no optional rules or equipment presented therein are part of the campaign at this time.

SELECT A SPECIES

* Players must select any one of the following species for their heroes: Fraal; Mechalus; Sesheyan; T'sa; Weren; and Human.
* Alien races contained in the *Alien Compendium* are currently reserved for Supporting Cast Members (SCMs) and are not available for starting heroes.

PROFESSION

Players may select any of the professions outlined in the PHB including: Combat Specialists (CS), Diplomats (DP), Free agents (FA), Technical Operatives (TO), and Mindwalkers (MW). Players may wish to avoid designing solitary (lone wolf) or highly specialized heroes (such as grid pilots).

CAREERS

Players may select a career from the sample careers listed in the SD campaign setting, pages 237-247 or use any of the sample careers listed in the PHB pages 111-117. Alternately, you may use these samples as a guide and invent your own career. Simply come up with a word or short phrase that describes what your hero does.

* Signature equipment is not used in the Living Verge setting — all heroes purchase their equipment using their starting funds.
* With the exception of the Marybellen Militia or Merchant Marine, no hero may start play as a member of any military organization. Benefits from joining these organizations can be found in the Allegiances section section of these rules.
* Heroes may not be Concord Administrators.
* All heroes who work for established business organizations start at the appropriate level based upon their authority score (see Social Status, Authority & Wealth, below).

CHARACTER ORIGIN

Heroes may be from any of the Stellar Nations or a native of the Verge, as described in the SD campaign setting. Benefits from hero origins are covered in that reference. Additionally, all heroes receive the following bonus skills, based on their origin:

* Knowledge: Verge System (for Vergers) or Knowledge: Stellar Nation (for Arrivers) at rank 3.
* Knowledge: Native Language or Knowledge: Galactic Standard language at rank 3.
* Austrin heroes may purchase a charge rifle with their starting funds (this is an exception to the equipment restrictions below), although they must obey any local laws when carrying or using this weapon.

ABILITY SCORES

Heroes must follow all rules and restrictions regarding

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abilities, as described in the PHB. Players may allocate 60 points among six ability scores, provided that the distribution is consistent with their professional and species requirements and limitations and the general Alternity game rules. Players may elect to "spend" fewer than their maximum allocated points (unused points are lost and cannot be spent at a later time).

OPTIONAL CHARACTER CHARACTERISTICS

Heroes may possess any of the character options described below (however, heroes may have only one source of psionic abilities):

MUTATIONS

Mutants are part of everyday life on Marybelle, though they continue to receive reactions from locals ranging from full acceptance to outright distrust. Mutant heroes must follow the rules in the PHB (Chapter 13) with the following modifications.

* Mutants must be of human stock, and forfeit the additional skill point bonus that human characters typically receive, as detailed in the PHB.
* Players may not select mutations after campaign play has begun. If the mutation option is not selected at hero creation, the only way a hero can become a mutant is due to the outcome of an adventure.
* Heroes may be of any origin (engineered or natural) and may be either individuals or community members. Whichever option is selected, all mutant heroes may have up to the maximum number of advantageous mutation points allowed for their mutant type (see PHB pg 213-15). A player may elect to spend any amount of these points, but need not spend the entire allowance. Unused points are lost, resulting in neither additional benefits or drawbacks. Drawback points must equal 1 point less than advantageous mutations. For example, a hero with 7 advantage points (naturally occurring individual mutant) will have 6 drawback points, while a player who elects 4 advantage points (may be any type of mutant) will have 3 drawback points.
* When selecting types of advantages and drawbacks, heroes must conform to the point combinations contained on page 215 of the PHB.
* Heroes may select psionic talents as a mutation only if they are not already psionic.
* Due to their background in Genetic Engineering, Thuldan heroes may remove 1 point of drawbacks.
* The mutations Wild Immunity System and Deadly Immunity are not allowed for the LV setting.
* On Marybelle, mutants with powerful and dangerous abilities must register. Heroes with the following mutations are assumed to be on file with local law agencies: Acid Touch, Electric Aura, Natural Attack, Energy Reflection, Improved Natural Attack, and Poison Attack. A hero's registration number is the player's RPGA number followed by the letter M or P for psionics or mutations, respectively (or MP, if both are present). In the case of multiple characters, the alphanumeric designation is followed by a numeral, in sequence. For example, as a psionic character, Shongar's registration number would be 157481P1. Shongar's player also controls another hero, the brave Rengus-Regis, who is a telepathic mutant. Rengus-Regis' designation is 157481MP2.

PSIONICS

Players who elect to create Mindwalkers, talent, or psionic mutant heroes must follow the following guidelines:

* Heroes may only have one source of psionic abilities, through either the Mindwalker profession (including Diplomat/Mindwalkers), psionic mutation, or a talent.
* All heroes with psionic abilities are registered as such. The nature and power level of their psionic ability is on file with local government and law enforcement and can be accessed through identity cards.
* Psionic points are calculated and recovered using the rules in the PHB.
* If psionics are not selected at hero creation, the only way a hero can become a psionic or talent is due to the outcome of an adventure.

CYBERTECHNOLOGY

Heroes may purchase cyberware items of Common and Controlled availability that are PL7 and below. Of the items in the PHB, only the nanocomputer, bodyplating, and the subdermal comm gear require the one-time 10 SP expenditure described in the PHB. Those items that require a nanocomputer are denoted with a "*" below. Items marked with a "**" below and their related equivalents in the A&EG do not require a nanocomputer or the 10 SP cost.

Common	Controlled
Bio-Art**	Cyberoptics*
Bio-Watch**	MusclePlus*
Cyberlimb*	CF Skinweave**
Nanocomputer	Exoskeleton*
NI Jack*	
Optic Screen*	**Military**
Self-Repair Unit*	Battleklaw*
Subdermal Communication	Body Plating
Data Slot**	Subdermal Weapon*
ER (Active) Slot*	Reflex*
ER (Passive) Slot**	
Neural 3D,ext. *	**Restricted**
Subdermal NI*	Fast Chip*
Wireless NI*	

* All cyberware is assumed to be successfully implanted by an Ordinary Success at base cost.
* Cyberware cannot exceed Good quality. All ER and Data slots are assumed to be Good quality and require heroes to pay the cost for this quality, per the PHB.
* Heroes must adhere to all PHB restrictions regarding, battle damage, nanocomputer requirements, tolerance levels and cykosis.
* Mechalus heroes are exempt from the one-time 10 skill

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point cost for any cybergear. Additionally, Mechalus heroes receive their reflex wiring at hero creation and are the exception to the availability restriction for this item.

* Members of the Nariac Domain are required to pay the one-time 10 point cost for any cybergear they select, if applicable. This "free" item does not cost the hero any starting funds, but Nariac heroes are not exempted from any SP related costs for cybergear.
* Weren heroes must remove their primitive flaw before they can implant any cybergear. These heroes are able to remove this flaw early by spending 8 skill points at hero creation; otherwise, the weren must follow the PHB rules for buying off the flaw (at 6th level).
* Additional cyberware is available following hero creation, adhering to the above restrictions. Heroes may not perform cyber-surgery upon other heroes.

SKILLS

All skills contained within the PHB are allowable for the LV campaign, with the following modifications:

* The minimum cost for any skill, including psionics, is one point.
* Heroes may purchase rank benefits early, as outlined on page 63 of the PHB.
* Teach (General & Specific) skills cannot be used on other heroes to reduce any costs associated with advancement.
* Cybersurgery cannot be used to reduce costs or improve results of cybertech implants (see above).
* Optional FX skills detailed in the GMG are not available to heroes.

PERKS & FLAWS (OPTIONAL)

Perks and flaws described in the PHB are allowed within the LV campaign, with the following exceptions and modifications:

* Unless specifically noted in the books, all perks and flaws may be selected only once.
* Alien artifact, Powerful Ally, Powerful Enemy, Filthy Rich, and Clueless perks and flaws may not be selected by heroes.
* Heroes with the Dirt Poor flaw receive the same starting funds as described below, however they lose any funds that are not spent on initial equipment. Additionally, these heroes must lose one half of all monetary rewards gained in adventures.

ATTRIBUTES, ATTITUDES, TRAITS, & MOTIVATIONS

When selecting attributes, players should keep in mind that certain attitudes, traits, and motivations make other characters reluctant to travel with them or to accept certain adventure opportunities. Players will be asked to reveal their attributes to the judge at the beginning of the game, and read them to fellow players after the game, for the purposes of scoring.

* The moral attitudes Despicable and Unscrupulous are not allowed for heroes.
* The character trait Amoral is not allowed.
* Players are encouraged, but not required, to determine a motivation for their hero. Motivations may be updated as a hero advances.

STARTING FUNDS

* Except for items provided to all starting characters as listed below, characters in LV are required to purchase their starting equipment (including cyberware) with their initial funds.
* Heroes receive the maximum starting funds for their profession, plus a $2,000 bonus to purchase items and equipment. After these funds are spent, the VC provides another $2,000 in credit to purchase equipment. These funds cannot be combined with unused starting funds and unused credit is not available after hero creation. The following table outlines the total starting funds by profession, with all modifiers included:

Profession	Starting Funds	VC Credit
Combat Specialist	$ 5,000	$2,000
Diplomat	$ 8,000	$2,000
Free Agent	$ 6,000	$2,000
Technical Operative	$ 6,000	$2,000
Mindwalker	$ 4,000	$2,000

EQUIPMENT

All heroes begin the game with some simple mundane equipment, such as a few changes of street clothes; shoes; a wallet, purse, or pouch; a wrist watch; a toiletry kit; and a suitcase, bag, or trunk to carry these goods. Additionally, each hero owns a soft e-suit (PHB page 143), a respirator mask and filters (PHB page 144), a set of communication gear (PHB, page 137), and an identity card. All of these "free" items are of ordinary quality, and contain no enhancements. Players purchase their heroes' equipment from the lists contained with the *Players Handbook*, STAR*DRIVE campaign guide, and the *Arms & Equipment Guide* with the following guidelines:

* All items must be of PL7 or below and cannot exceed Good quality.
* Items of military and restricted availability cannot be purchased.
* "Signature Equipment" (PHB page 111) is not used in the Living Verge campaign.
* Psi restraints, Ber Tek Excavation projectors, satilites, Ber-Tek laser torch, General Industries walkers, and poisons of any type are prohibited.
* A&EG specialty fabrics are available, but multiple fabrics cannot be blended into a single garment.
* Standard vehicles are acquired in the same manner as normal equipment (including availability limitations) and do not require certificates.

WEAPONS, AMMUNITION, & ARMOR

The Verge Confederation allows heroes the chance to buy items with common and controlled availability. A hero's VC identification card functions as the legal permit required for these purchases. Carrying and use of these items is regulated by the law level in effect for any given area. Heroes

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who violate the law are subject to the appropriate penalty for any such transgressions.

* Heroes may purchase any common or controlled items through the Verge Confederation with the following exceptions: Attack armor, armor piercing rounds, flechette rounds, hand flamers, and all poisons (including those used with dart guns).
* Heavy weapons (flame throwers, weapons that use the heavy weapons broad skill or its related specialty skills), demolition supplies, and grenades are prohibited regardless of PL and may be obtained only through an adventure.
* Weapons and armor that are not available for purchase may become available either during game play (modules) or during interactive events at conventions.

ROBOTS

Currently, robot characters are not part of the LV campaign. Heroes may not purchase robots as part of their equipment.

SPACESHIPS

Player-owned ships will not be used in adventures at this time. In modules where a ship is needed, transportation will be provided, or the PCs will need to hire a ship. Since player-owned ships have no direct game impact, there are no expenses, such as loans, upkeep, or repairs, for the character to consider. Likewise, no revenue can be gained through use of the ship. Ships cannot be sold for the purpose of profit or favors. During a Living Verge adventure, the ship is either being repaired, out of the system, or otherwise unusable for flight.

ALLEGIANCES

All heroes have an allegiance with the Verge Confederation. Heroes may also have an established allegiance with either the Marybelle Militia or the Merchant Marine, following the rules outlined below:

* It is assumed that the hero's specific skills and talents will be put to use by the organization in some useful manner, regardless of what those skills and talents may be. Therefore there is no minimum skill requirement to join, nor any specific skill benefit received for joining.
* The service obligations from joining either of these groups results in the heroes being able to be called for service by the local government as well as typically spending time in reserve maneuvers.
* Any hero who joins the Militia or Merchant Marine receives a free contact (either information, resources or expert) from their chosen group, per the rules for contacts, below.
* The hero gets a -1 step reaction bonus when dealing with other members of the Marybellen Military (including the Militia/Merchant Marine).
* Relations between both of these groups and the Outriders are strained. Members of either the Militia or Merchant Marine receive a +2 step penalty when interacting with Outriders.

SOCIAL STATUS, AUTHORITY, & WEALTH

The Living Verge campaign utilizes a portion of the social status rules covered in pages 106-108 of the GMG.

* All heroes calculate an authority and fame score based on the tables in the GMG. These tables use the hero's career to determine these scores — if your hero's career is not listed, select the career that most closely matches your hero's career.
* Advancement in authority and fame is based upon tournament play — ranks in these abilities may not be purchased with advancement points.
* Character wealth is determined through starting funds (see above) and maintained through game play on a character ledger.

CONTACTS

The purpose of a contact is to provide information, resources, or expert skills. Contacts do not travel with heroes. They can be accessed by players during game play for assistance. Diplomat heroes receive a contact as a career benefit. Other hero types may purchase contacts with advancement points as described on page 105 of the GMG. Additionally, contacts:

* Must be one of three main types: Information, Resource, or Expert skill contacts.
* Each contact must have a specific name and origin (ie. bartender, bureaucrat, agent, etc.).
* Specific game effects from contacts will depend on adventure texts and Gamemaster rolls.
* Generally, players should expect contacts to provide minor assistance or limited access to information.
* Hero contacts should be documented on the character ledger and maintained during game play.
* Non-player characters introduced in tournaments and interactive events are not available as contacts unless specifically stated by the adventure. ■

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internet 101

DEUS EX WEBICA BY ED GIBSON

This month's topic is gods. Unfortunately, www.god.com does not exist, so it's going to take a little more work. The place to start is the "Encyclopedia Mythica," at http://www.pantheon.org. This site claims to be an encyclopaedia of mythology, folklore, and legend and they're not kidding. You can search for specific topics or browse the site. The site covers Arthurian, Aztec, Celtic, Chinese, Egyptian, Etruscan, Greek, Haitian, Hindu, Japanese, Latvian, Mayan, Mesopotamian, Native American, Norse, Persian, Polynesian, and Roman mythology. You can learn, for example, that Atarpa was the Polynesian goddess of the dawn and Burotu is the Fijian island of eternal life and joy, equivalent to the western Heaven.

The site's still-under-construction Genealogy section provides several family trees, including the Norse gods and Helen of Troy. The Image Gallery is extensive, offering more than 250 images, although the Greek Mythology and Heroic Legends make up more than half the total pictures. The Egyptian area includes most of the major deities: Ammon, Anubis, Bastet, Horus, Isis, and Osiris. The site also provides an extensive list of mythology and folklore links.

A site which may be familiar to many of us from our school days is the on-line version of Bulfinch's Mythology at http://www.bulfinch.org. The Age of Fable (Greek and Roman) and Age of Chivalry (Legends of King Arthur) are ready, and the Legends of Charlemagne area is under development.

Are you ready to take a virtual tour? Then visit http://www.ancientsites.com for tours of historic Rome, Athens, Egypt and colonial New York City. This site requires you to register to access many of the features it offers. Registration is free, although "patrons" (paying members) have additional options. In addition to the tours, there are online historical games you can play. The site provides message boards and chat rooms, so you can discuss your interests with other visitors.

One excellent resource for gaming background information is http://www.sacredsites.com. This site offers excellent photographs and detailed information on many real world places of particular interest to gamers. Among the site's offerings are the Pyramids, the Sphinx, and the Temple of Luxor in Egypt. Travelling across the globe, the site provides information on the stone statues of Easter Island, the standing stones of Stonehenge and dozens of other places of legendary power. There are two additional sets of standing stones documented in Scotland which offer new locations for your villains' mystical rites. The new world is not forgotten, from Devil's Tower in Wyoming (prominently featured in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*) to Chichen Itza Mexico and its Mayan pyramid. Most of the locations given could be readily adapted for an adventure in your existing campaign by using the pictures provided and looking for adventure hooks in the descriptions.

Have you ever wanted to adventure with the gods? No, I'm not talking about the LIVING CITY™ campaign, we covered LC in the August issue. This issue I'm talking about the PLANESCAPE™ campaign setting. This month's (and first ever) Reader URL comes from Sandy Spitz, who suggested http://www.mimir.net. This is a massive site with a wide variety of information. The site contains such esoteric offerings as essays on morality and the atomic theory of the elemental planes. There is also information on factions and sects. A sect is similar to a faction, but it's not recognized in Sigil, the city at the center of the multiverse. There is a dictionary of cant, the bizarre argot of the Planescape setting, and you can even submit your own terms for possible inclusion in the dictionary. The site is large and can be awkward to navigate, so I recommend you start at http://www.mimir.net/sitemap.html. The FAQ answers a number of common questions, including the ever-popular, "where can I find the Planescape font?" It's located at http://users.journey.net/~gleep/dnd.htm.

I'll leave you this month with a non-god-related site, but one that I check on a regular basis: http://www.apbonline.com. It provides police and crime-related news, and is updated multiple times during the day. The "Unsolved" section offers information on a current crime for amateur sleuths to study or for you to use in building realistic campaign materials. The "Green River Killer," with 49 victims between 1982 and 1984 is the current subject. A wide variety of evidence is presented which can be adapted to your campaign (including dental records). The "G-Files" section provides actual government file information. See the "Real X-Files" section for information on UFO's, Roswell, and other topics for modern games.

That's all for this issue; if you have any suggested sites for the column, send them to polyhedron@wizards.com. ■

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COSCON 2K

March 10 — March 12
Days Inn Conference Center, Butler, PA
The Circle of Swords Gaming Guild provides a host of gaming activities, including RPGA® Network sanctioned tournaments, LIVING CITY™ Features and Benefit events; collectible card games; board games; science fiction, fantasy, and historical miniature events; free-form roleplaying; and other roleplaying events. Additional activities include a dealer room, new game demonstrations, computer room, movies, guests, and other special events.
Cost: $15 until February 25, $25 thereafter and at the door.
Contact: Circle of Swords, P.O. Box 2126, Butler, PA, 16003.

EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN 2000

March 31 — April 2
Campus of Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, IL
8 gaming sessions, special guests, used game auction, miniatures contests. Games include RPGA® AD&D® and LIVING CITY™, WHITE WOLF games, SHADOWRUN, DEADLANDS, WARHAMMER, WARZONE, CHRONOPIA, NAPOLEONICS, CAR WARS, EMPIRE BUILDER, AXIS & ALLIES, MAGIC: THE GATHERING®, POKEMON™, and many other board, miniature, collectible card, roleplaying, and LARP games.
Cost: $12.00 pre-registered, $15.00 at the door.
No event fees.
Contact: Egyptian Campaign 2000 c/o SIUC Strategic Games Society, Office of Student Development, Carbondale, IL 62901-4425. For more information, call Scott Keene at (618)549-4756, email ECGamCon@aol.com, or visit our Web site at http://www.siu.edu/~gamesoc.

conventions classifieds

FEATURING RPGA®-SANCTIONED TOURNAMENTS

WHITE KNIGHTS, an independent gaming magazine, is looking for amateur writers and artists. For more information, including a free sample issue, contact: Bill Brierton, 12420 Old Colon Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772 or Kheled@juno.com.

PLAYERS SEEK: Two experienced AD&D players seeking a group in the Cincinnati area. We are seeking mature gamers who are willing to play on a regular basis. If interested, please email at greyclouds@msn.com or contact Gary after 7:00 (EST. Time) at (606)746-8086.

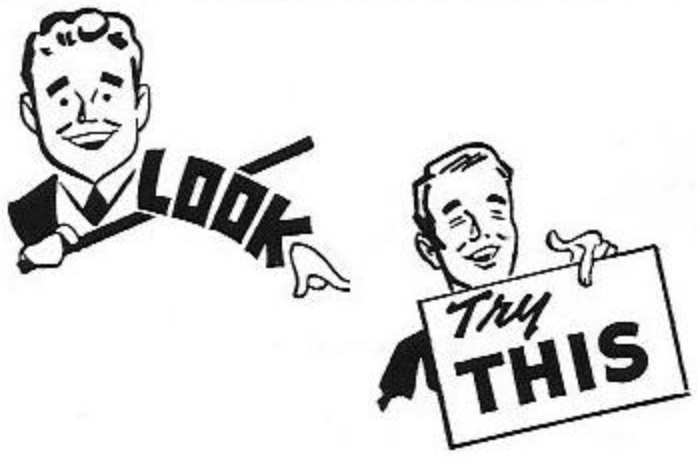
LOOKING TO BUY, sell and trade out of print gaming materials including RPGs such as Dungeons & Dragons, FASA, Steve Jackson Games, GDW, Boardgames, Wargames, and especially TSR, Greyhawk, Forgotten Realms, older material, and any RPGA items (modules or other merchandise). Please visit my Web page at: http://members.aol.com/aleeder454.

INTERESTED in playing LARPs in northern New Jersey, including live combat, World of Darkness, and others? Email mjg@io.com for more information!

INTRODUCING. . . BEYOND! A great e-zine and Web site devoted to sf, fantasy, horror, gaming, and the paranormal. Come to interact with other gamers, to read great articles and stories, or more! Are you a new writer or artist? Feel free to submit articles, fiction, art, and more to the e-zine! Beyond is already a great site and is expanding all the time. What's more, it's free! Just point your browser to http://www.mindshiftdesign.com/beyondzine.

WANTED: Roleplaying games and accessories looking for all TSR, MERP, RIFTS, Faded Suns, and figurines. Contact Robert Tomaszewski, 6910 Interbay Blvd. #63, Tampa, FL 33616. Email Rtomas3256@aol.com.

LOOKING for RPGA members in Florida. If you live in Lee, Charlotte, or Collier County, please contact The Game Face Club of SW Florida at: P.O. Box 151494 or Email us at: thegamefaceclub@yahoo.com.



AND IT'S FREE.
SEND IN YOUR CLASSIFIEDS!

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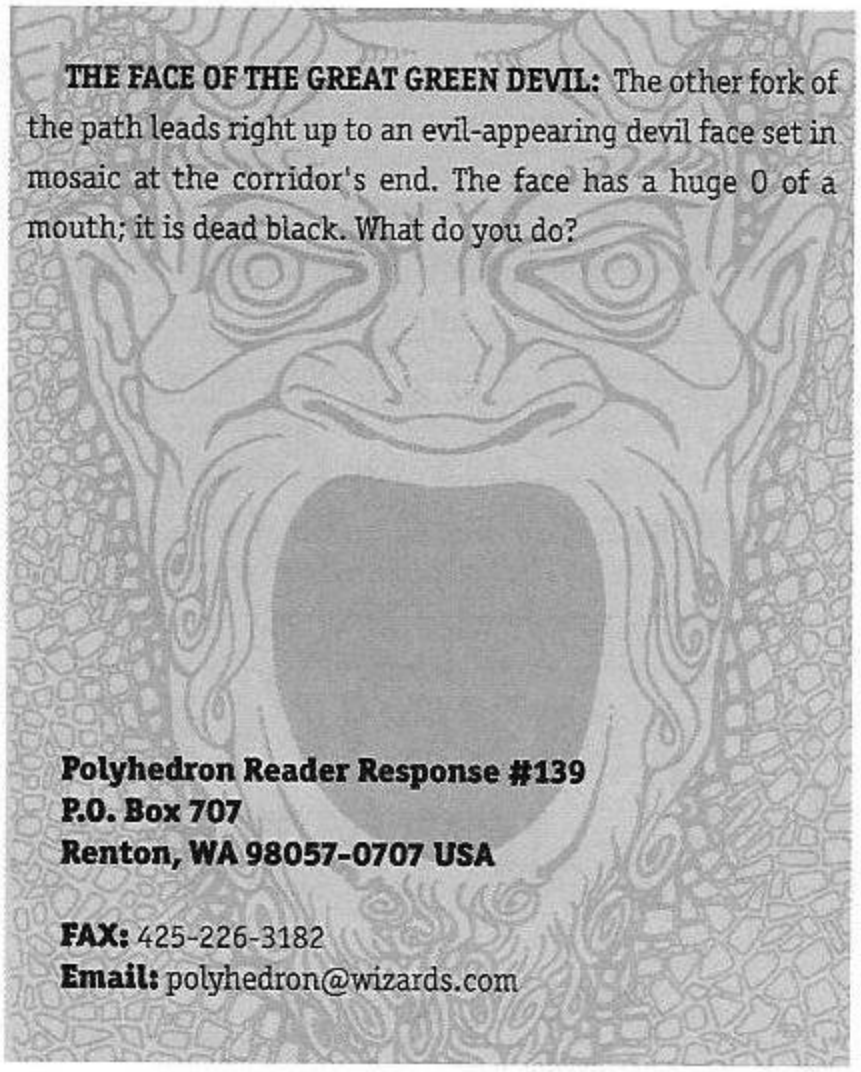
reader survey

WE'RE HERE TO HEAR

Please rank each article or section of the magazine from 1-5 with 1 being "DYNO-MITE!" and 5 being "What you talkin about, Willis?!" Please include any other comments you feel are appropriate. All responses received on or before November 1, 1999 will be entered for a drawing to win a free copy of the AD&D adventure *Vortex of Madness*. Woo-hoo!

RPGA # _____ Name _____

	RATING				
ARTICLE	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Erik's Editorial	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Notes From HQ	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Table Talk	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Service Points	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tournament Ordering Policies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2000 Club Decathlon	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adventurer's Guild: 2000	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Member Spotlight	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
City Stories: The Hall of Luck	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Elminster's Everwinking Eye	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Glyphs of Devotion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Powers That Be: Xan Yae	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Practical Tournament Play	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Marybelle's Visitor Grid	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
LIVING VERGE Hero Creation Rules	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Internet 101	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Conventions & Classifieds	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



THE FACE OF THE GREAT GREEN DEVIL: The other fork of the path leads right up to an evil-appearing devil face set in mosaic at the corridor's end. The face has a huge O of a mouth; it is dead black. What do you do?

Polyhedron Reader Response #139
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Renton, WA 98057-0707 USA

FAX: 425-226-3182
Email: polyhedron@wizards.com

COMMENTS

☐ **1. I thrust my sword arm into the inky darkness, hoping to illuminate the tunnel beyond with my trusty torch.**

☐ **2. I curse the fates that consigned me to the life of a henchman before jumping in.**